A BOOK OF MODERN ESSAYS

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INTRODUCTION

While assembling this collection of modern essays, the editors have tried to hold a single principle steadfastly in mind. They have sought to make the collection a truly representative one: that is to say, one which includes examples of the different kinds of essays by contemporary English and American authors which have won the esteem of American readers. In other words, they have tried to avoid, on the one hand, the bias of their personal preferences in the selection of essays, and on the other hand, the limitation of a special subject matter. This volume is designed to appeal not to specialists in sociology or political science, but to the general reader. Though essays bearing upon the organization and government of society are included in the volume, they form only a portion of its contents, and they are distinctly such as have not been written in the manner of the specialist. The collection, then, cannot be described as either "light" or "heavy" in its tone, as either chiefly political or chiefly sociological in its subject matter. What consistency a collection of this sort should have is to be found, first, in the timeliness of the articles included—that is to say, in their importance and attractiveness for the contemporary mind—and secondly, in the fresh and literary flavor of their wording, which guarantees that what is significant shall be found interesting as well. The editors of this collection have, perhaps, been more concerned that the essays be timely than that they possess a literary style. If they do have a fresh and literary flavor, it is that writing of this sort is characteristic of the age we live in.

So there is considerable diversity of subject matter. In fact, as a glance at the title page will show, the essays have been

grouped together in such a way as to reveal this diversity. Essays on the international mind and its humane reflection even during the World War rub elbows with a group of recent critical essays in appreciation of certain of the great works in world fiction. Discussions of the use and nature of words and the purpose of a college education offer contrast to more purely literary essays with their genial and informal treatment of themes of universal interest. But most important of all is the series of essays with which the collection opens. For, though the volume contains representative essays by some of the more prominent English writers now living, it is predominantly an American collection. More than half of the selections included are by American authors. The largest group of topics is that devoted to American problems. And of these problems the greater number are concerned with the question of American nationality. For the generation to which we belong is deeply interested in the formation of that American civilization which so many persons are discussing in our contemporary journals of opinion. A surprising number of people, students in our colleges, women in their clubs, and business men of broader than merely professional concerns, may be discovered at almost any hour of the day or night in the midst of such discussions. Theories of government, proposals of legislative reform, do not indeed attract us to-day with the magnetism of a decade ago. But discussions are constantly arising about the morals and manners of the "younger generation," the conflicts (which are cultural as well as commercial) among the geographical sections of our country, about the present seat of our national culture or the probability of our having any.

It has resulted, therefore, that this collection is diverse not only in the variety of its subject-matter, but also in the different types of essays represented. They are as various as the different styles of writing essays which may be found in our contemporary literature. Some of them are perhaps journalistic rather than literary, both in their references to current events and in the unpremeditated flow of their sentences. But essays written

by men on the staffs of newspapers and magazines will serve to show that no barrier necessarily exists between journalism and literature. Good writing follows upon the conscientious application of one's talent, whether he is isolated in a professorial chair or battling in the maelstrom of everyday life. A writer need not be dull in order to be profound, or the denizen of an ivory tower if he would avoid the contamination of transient or plebeian opinions. Not a few of these essays, then, are worthy of attention for the various and admirable ways in which gifted personalities have expressed themselves. Irony and sympathetic partiality for one's subject and straightforward sobriety of style are all represented. There are examples of the loosely constructed essay and the closely logical, of writing colored by the vernacular of our daily speech and the elevated language of poetry. Head-notes have been inserted before each essay, not to give irrelevant information about the author, but to make conspicuous these different qualities of style, these different kinds of essays, as well as the variety (which has already been mentioned) in their methods of attack upon subjects of general interest to American readers to-day.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
"Highbrow" and "Lowbrow"	*Van Wyck Brooks*	1
What is a Puritan?	*Stuart P. Sherman*	17
Portrait of a Family	*Olivia Howard Dunbar*	45
The Norwegian Migration to America	*Calvin Coolidge*	65
The West and American Ideals	*Frederick Jackson Turner*	79
The Once Open Road	*Charles Merz*	101
Sentimental America	*H. S. Canby*	113
Louisiana: (Madame de la Louisiane)	*Basil Thompson*	127
Fez	*Philip Guedalla*	141
The Rhythm of Life	*Alice Meynell*	147
Summer	*Maurice Hewlett*	153
On An Unknown Country	*Hilaire Belloc*	161
Ideals and Day-Dreams	*Kenneth Grahame*	169
Castles in Spain	*John Galsworthy*	187
Science and the Faith of the Modern	*Edwin Grant Conklin*	201
On Friendship	*A. Clutton-Brock*	219
A Relic	*Max Beerbohm*	225
The Cheerful Breakfast Table	*Meredith Nicholson*	235

		PAGE
CONVERSATION	*A. C. Benson*	249
TRIVIA	*Logan Pearsall Smith*	259
ON JARGON	*Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch*	265
NAMES PRACTICAL AND POETIC	*Max Eastman*	287
THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE	*Paul Shorey*	297
WHAT THE AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLAR GETS FROM OXFORD	*Frank Aydelotte*	321
LITERARY TASTE	*Arnold Bennett*	339
DICKENS	*George Santayana*	347
THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD	*Henry James*	365
DON QUIXOTE	*Sir Walter Raleigh*	373
THE NOVEL DÉMEUBLÉ	*Willa Cather*	389
THE POLITICS OF MARTHA AND OF MARY	*Alfred E. Zimmern*	397
AUTUMN TINTS IN CHIVALRY	*C. E. Montague*	419
INDEX OF AUTHORS		431

"HIGHBROW" AND "LOWBROW"*

VAN WYCK BROOKS

(Those who read Mr. Mencken, whether to damn or to praise, are alike disposed to forget that he was not the first in the field. A Teutonic gloom of temperament and a Nietzschean pugnacity of mind, indeed, have given to Mr. Mencken's expositions of our national shortcomings a foreign flavor that has made them the more conspicuous. But eight years before Mencken's *Book of Prefaces* (1917) appeared, Van Wyck Brooks had made essentially the same criticism of our national society, though in a more gracious fashion. In 1909, only two years after this youth from New Jersey had graduated from Harvard, he published *The Wine of the Puritans.* Their wine he found to be as bad for the national liver and consequently for the national complexion, as did Mr. Mencken later. But he served it up in a foggy glass, and few took the trouble to read a book which was little more than an incoherent assemblage of consciously chiseled epigrams. In 1913 he tried again with *The Malady of the Ideal.* But, despite the hint of Ibsen's *Wild Duck* in the title, the success of the book was not startling.

In 1915, however, *America's Coming of Age* appeared. Those who were in college at the time will remember the enthusiasm with which it was received. We were ready to hear so incisive a writer as its author had at last become condemn the dull drab lives of our Puritan ancestors. We were alarmed when after crossing the continent a couple of times, he cited his own personal observations, upon the dullness and the drabness he found still to prevail. We became conscience-stricken when he

* From *America's Coming of Age.* B. W. Huebsch, 1915.

lamented our own feeble drifting towards the materialism of business and our own superficial chatter about the profound concerns of life and letters. But we took hope when he cheerfully assured us that there were, nevertheless, symptoms of a new age. And we were not a little proud when we discovered that it was upon us he was relying. It was we who came at the opportune moment in the development of the nation when the chasm that had always separated the highbrows from the lowbrows in America could at last be bridged. And we were to do it by vitalizing the intelligence of the former with the freshness of democratic feeling that pervaded the latter. We were to drag our ideals from their inaccessible totem-poles and charge into contemporary society gaily brandishing them. Van Wyck Brooks, in fact, served us in the matter of literature and of general culture as Woodrow Wilson was doing at the same time in the allied field of politics. They were our prophets, as well as our critics. And only some years later did we begin to read in Mr. Mencken the same criticisms without the same optimistic promise of a new social ideal.)

"HIGHBROW" AND "LOWBROW"

I

At the time when he was trying to release humanity from the cross of gold on which, as he said, it was crucified, the Apostle of Free Silver—in this matter, at least, representing the old American frame of mind—announced that the opinion of all the professors in the United States would not affect his opinions in the least. Now this, plainly, was a very formidable dilemma. For on the one hand stood a body of supposed experts in economic theory, on the other a man whose profession it was to change and reform economic practice,—the one knowing, the other doing; and not only was there no compatibility between them but an openly avowed and cynical contempt of theory on the part of practice was a principal element in the popularity of a popular hero. Was Mr. Bryan, however, to blame for it? To know anything of the economic theory which is taught in American universities—in many cases compulsorily taught—is to confess that blame is not the right word. For this economic theory is at the least equally cynical. It revolves round and round in its tree-top dream of the economic man; and no matter how much the wind blows political economy never comes down. Incompatibility, mutual contempt between theory and practice, is in the very nature of things.

One might extend the illustration to literature, merely substituting one professor for another and putting any typical best-selling novelist in the place of Mr. Bryan. It is a peculiar twist in the academic mind to suppose that a writer belongs to literature only when he is dead; living he is, vaguely, something else; and an habitual remoteness from the creative mood has

made American professors quite peculiarly academic. "Literature," as distinguished from excellent writing, is, in the American universities, a thing felt to have been done, and while for all one knows it may continue to be done the quality in it which makes it literature only comes out, like the quality in wines, with age.

Now I suppose that most of the American novelists in our day are university men; they have learned to regard literature as an august compound of Browning, Ben Jonson, and Hesiod; and consequently when they themselves begin to write it is in a spirit of real humility that they set themselves to the composition of richly rewarded trash. I am sure of this: it is modesty that lies behind the "best-seller"; and there is an aspect in which the spectacle of writers regarding themselves as humble tradesfolk has a certain charm. But the conception of literature as something, so to speak, high and dry, gives to the craft of authorship in America a latitude like that of morality in Catholic countries: so long as the heavenly virtues are upheld mundane virtues may shift as they will. In a word, writers are relieved of responsibility, and while their ethical conscience remains quite sound they absolve themselves from any artistic conscience whatsoever. And the worst of it is that precisely these writers of immitigable trash are often the bright, vigorous, intuitive souls who *could* make literature out of American life. Has it ever been considered how great a knowledge of men, what psychological gifts of the first order their incomparable achievement of popularity implies?

These two attitudes of mind have been phrased once for all in our vernacular as "Highbrow" and "Lowbrow." I have proposed these terms to a Russian, an Englishman, and a German, asking each in turn whether in his country there was anything to correspond with the conceptions implied in them. In each case they have been returned to me as quite American, authentically our very own, and, I should add, highly suggestive.

What side of American life is not touched by this antithesis? What explanation of American life is more central or more illu-

minating? In everything one finds this frank acceptance of twin values which are not expected to have anything in common: on the one hand a quite unclouded, quite unhypocritical assumption of transcendent theory ("high ideals"); on the other a simultaneous acceptance of catchpenny realities. Between university ethics and business ethics, between American culture and American humor, between Good Government and Tammany, between academic pedantry and pavement slang, there is no community, no genial middle ground.

The very accent of the words "Highbrow" and "Lowbrow" implies an instinctive perception that this is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. For both are used in a derogatory sense. The "Highbrow" is the superior person whose virtue is admitted but felt to be an inept unpalatable virtue; while the "Lowbrow" is a good fellow one readily takes to, but with a certain scorn for him and all his works. And what is true of them as personal types is true of what they stand for. They are equally undesirable, and they are incompatible; but they divide American life between them.

II

They always have divided American life between them; and to understand them one has to go back to the beginning of things,—for without doubt the Puritan Theocracy is the all-influential fact in the history of the American mind. It was the Puritan conception of the Deity as not alone all-determining but precisely responsible for the practical affairs of the race, as constituting, in fact, the State itself, which precluded in advance any central bond, any responsibility, any common feeling in American affairs and which justified the unlimited centrifugal expediency which has always marked American life. And the same instinct that made against centrality in government made against centrality in thought, against common standards of any kind. The imminent eternal issues the Puritans felt so keenly, the equally imminent practical issues they experienced so monot-

onously threw almost no light on one another; there was no middle ground between to mitigate, combine, or harmonize them.

So it is that from the beginning we find two main currents in the American mind running side by side but rarely mingling —a current of overtones and a current of undertones—and both equally unsocial: on the one hand, the current of Transcendentalism, originating in the piety of the Puritans, becoming a philosophy in Jonathan Edwards, passing through Emerson, producing the fastidious refinement and aloofness of the chief American writers, and, as the coherent ideals and beliefs of Transcendentalism gradually faded out, resulting in the final unreality of most contemporary American culture; and on the other hand the current of catchpenny opportunism, originating in the practical shifts of Puritan life, becoming a philosophy in Franklin, passing through the American humorists, and resulting in the atmosphere of contemporary business life.

Thus the literature of the seventeenth century in America is composed in equal parts, one may fairly say, of piety and advertisement; and the revered chronicles of New England had the double effect of proving how many pilgrim souls had been elected to salvation and of populating with hopeful immigrants a land where heaven had proved so indulgent.

For three generations the prevailing American character was compact in one type, the man of action who was also the man of God. Not until the eighteenth century did the rift appear and with it the essential distinction between "Highbrow" and "Lowbrow." It appeared in the two philosophers, Jonathan Edwards and Benjamin Franklin, who share the eighteenth century between them. In their amazing purity of type and in the apparent incompatibility of their aims they determined the American character as a racial fact, and after them the Revolution became inevitable. Channing, Lincoln, Emerson, Whitman, Grant, Webster, Garrison, Edison, Mr. Rockefeller, Mrs. Eddy are all, in one way or another, permutations and combinations of these two grand progenitors of the American character.

Strange that at the very outset two men should have arisen so aptly side by side and fixed the poles of our national life! For no one has ever more fully and typically than Jonathan Edwards displayed the infinite inflexibility of the upper levels of the American mind, nor any one more typically than Franklin the infinite flexibility of its lower levels.

The intellect of Jonathan Edwards was like the Matterhorn, steep, icy, and pinnacled. At its base were green slopes and singing valleys filled with all sorts of little tender wild-flowers—for he was the most lovable of men; but as soon as the ground began to rise in good earnest all this verdurous life came to an abrupt end: not one green or living thing could subsist in that frozen soil, on those pale heights. It was the solitude of logic that led him to see in destiny only a wrathful tyrant and a viper's trail in the mischievous ways of little boys and girls.

I confess to an old-time and so to speak aboriginal affection for this man, so gently solicitous to make up in his daily walk and conversation for the ferocious impulsions of that brain of his. He was even the most romantic of men, as I thought once, and I well remember that immense old musty book of his theology, covered with mildew, with its desert of tiny print, which I carried out with me into the fields and read, in the intervals of birdnesting, under the hedgerows and along the borders of the wood: the sun fell for the first time on those clammy old pages and the pallid thoughts that lay in them, and the field-sparrows all about were twittering in a language which, to tell the truth, was no more unintelligible to me. But everything that springs from solitude shines by a light of its own, and Manfred among the Alps was not more lonely than this rapt scholar in his parsonage among the Indians.

There are, however, solitudes and solitudes. Great poets and fruitful thinkers live apart themselves, perhaps, but they have society and the ways of men in their blood. They recollect in tranquillity, as it were, gestate, live again, and reveal the last significance of active generations rich in human stuff, in experi-

ence, in emotion, in common reason. Nothing like this existed in the background of Jonathan Edwards, no profound and complex race-life. Intellect in him, isolated and not responsible to the other faculties, went on its way unchecked; and he was able to spin those inept sublimities of his by subtracting from his mind every trace of experience, every touch of human nature as it really was among his innocent country-folk.

Notoriously, of course, our great Dr. Franklin simplified existence in precisely the opposite way; for the opposite of unmitigated theory is unmitigated practice. Who can deny that in *Poor Richard* the "Lowbrow" point of view for the first time took definite shape, stayed itself with axioms, and found a sanction in the idea of "policy"? It emerges there full-fledged, in its classical form, a two-dimensional wisdom, a wisdom shorn of overtones, the most accommodating wisdom in the world.

Were ever two views of life more incompatible than these? What indeed could Poor Richard have in common with an Angry God?

And what can Mr. Bryan have in common with political economy?

III

"Our people," said Emerson, "have their intellectual culture from one country and their duties from another." In how many spheres that phrase can be applied! Desiccated culture at one end and stark utility at the other have created a deadlock in the American mind, and all our life drifts chaotically between the two extremes. Consider, for example, our use of the English language. Literary English in England is naturally a living speech, which occupies the middle of the field and expresses the flesh and blood of an evolving race. Literary English with us is a tradition, just as Anglo-Saxon law with us is a tradition. They persist not as the normal expressions of a race, the essential fibre of which is permanently Anglo-Saxon, but through prestige and precedent and the will and habit of a dominating

class largely out of touch with a national fabric unconsciously taking form "out of school." No wonder that our literary style is "pure," that our literary tradition, our tradition especially in oratory and political prose, retains the spirit of the eighteenth century. But at what a cost! At the cost of expressing a popular life which bubbles with energy and spreads and grows and slips away ever more and more from the control of tested ideas, a popular life "with the lid off," which demands an intellectual outlet and finds one in slang, journalism, and unmannerly fiction.

After seventy years Carlyle's well-known appeal to Emerson still applies to the spirit of American culture: "For the rest, I have to object still (what you will call objecting against the Law of Nature) that we find you a speaker indeed, but as it were a *Soliloquizer* on the eternal mountain-tops only, in vast solitudes where men and their affairs lie all hushed in a very dim remoteness; and only *the man* and the stars and the earth are visible—whom, so fine a fellow seems he, we could perpetually punch into, and say, 'Why won't you come and help us then? We have terrible need of one man like you down among us! It is cold and vacant up there; nothing paintable but rainbows and emotions; come down and you shall do life-pictures, passions, facts. . . .'"

And what a comment on the same utterance that at this very moment an amiable New Englander should have been painting in Parson Wilbur and Hosea Biglow, respectively, unconscious of any tragic symbolism of things to come, the unbridgeable chasm between literate and illiterate America! Morally, no doubt, in Jaalam, they understood one another and got along very well, as Yankees will. But in Chicago?

IV

To pass now from the social to the personal question, since the question is at bottom a personal one, let us figure to ourselves how this divergence comes about and how it is that our educa-

tional system, instead of creating what President Eliot calls a "serviceable fellowship" between theory and practice, tends to set them apart and to confirm us all either in the one extreme or in the other.

Let us figure to ourselves a typical American who has grown up, as an American typically does grow up, in a sort of orgy of lofty examples, moralized poems, national anthems, and baccalaureate sermons; until he is charged with all manner of ideal purities, ideal honorabilities, ideal femininities, flag-wavings and skyscrapings of every sort;—until he comes to feel in himself the hovering presence of all manner of fine potentialities, remote, vaporous, and evanescent as a rainbow. All this time, it can fairly be said, he has not been taught to associate himself personally with ends even much lower than these, he has not been taught that life is a legitimate progress toward spiritual or intellectual ends at all, his instincts of acquisition, pleasure, enterprise, and desire have in no way been linked and connected with disinterested ends; he has had it very firmly embedded in his mind that the getting of a living is not a necessity incidental to some higher and more disinterested end, but that it is the prime and central end in things, and as a corollary to this he has been encouraged to assume that the world is a stamping-ground for every untrained, greedy, and aggressive impulse in him, that, in short, society is fair prey for what he can get out of it.

Let us imagine that, having grown up in this way, he is sent to college. And here, in order to keep the case a typical one, we shall have to exercise a little discrimination in the choice of a university.

It will not be Harvard, because the ideal of Harvard, as I shall point out, is not a typically modern American ideal. Nor will it be one of the modern utilitarian universities, which have no ideal at all. It will be any one of the others; and when I say this I mean that each of the others is in one way or another a development of the old American country college; its ideal, its experience, its tradition spring out of and lead one back to that.

Now among these old colleges Harvard might have been figured as an ever-developing, ever-liberalizing catholicism, of which they were all sectarian offshoots, established on a principle of progressive theological fragmentation, each one defending an orthodoxy its predecessors had outworn or violently setting up in defense of some private orthodoxy of its own. They founded themselves each on a remote dogma or system of dogma as their central and sufficient basis, and all their wheels turned in relation to the central theological dynamo. In a sense of course this was true also of Harvard, but with a marked difference. For the theologians who founded Harvard were men of action as well; in the seventeenth century a New England minister was also a politician, and the education of ministers for which Harvard was mainly established implied an education for public affairs as well, an education for society, so far as the word society can be used in connection with the early Puritans at all. Thus at the outset the founders of Harvard drove in the wedge of secularism: Harvard had from the beginning a sort of national basis, at least among New Englanders, and its dogmatic structure consequently reflected and shifted with and accommodated itself to the currents of national thought. Remaining in touch with society, it educated to a certain extent, relatively to an extraordinary extent, the social function of its students; and it is thus no accident that so large a proportion of the political, the literary, and the scientific life of America has sprung from it. But in the eighteenth century the conditions under which Harvard was established had ceased to be true. The minister was no longer a man of affairs,—he was a stark theologian, and usually of a type which the majority of his flock had outgrown. Yale, Princeton, and virtually all the other typically American colleges were founded by men of this type. Jonathan Edwards may figure for them all; the motive which led him to become the president of Princeton being precisely that his flock in Connecticut could no longer see the anger of God eye to eye with him. Already in his time the fathers and mothers of young America had submitted to the

charms of *Poor Richard's Almanac*—they had themselves for the most part become inveterately "Lowbrow"; but they seem to have believed that an Angry God might still be a good influence over young America himself.

To return now to the typical case with whom we began, let us imagine that he makes a typical choice and goes to a typical university. Having arrived there will he be confronted with an Angry God, or any sort of direct theological dogma? By no means. But there will have remained in the air a certain fragrance and vibration, as if an ideal had passed that way and not stayed, there will be intangible whispers and seductions, there will be a certain faint, rarified, remote, but curiously pervasive and insistent influence—like the sound of an Æolian harp or the recollection of Plato in some uncouth slum; there will be memories and portraits of many an old metaphysician, white, unearthly, fragile. It will all seem very much as if, the significance of these remote dogmas having evaporated, only the remoteness, in a way, had remained.

One would have to be very insensitive not to feel the quite unbalancing charm of this quality—so different from its comparatively robust Oxford parallel—in the old New England colleges, as in Princeton, Yale, and the other universities which have developed out of them; but one cannot help feeling also, I think, something vaguely Circean in it. And in fact, given the preliminary method of bringing up which I have sketched, what will be its effect in the case we are considering? Suddenly confronted during four years with just this remote influence of ideals, out of which the intellectual structure has evaporated and which never possessed a social structure, will he not find them too vague, too intangible, too unprepared for to be incorporated into his nature? Certainly ideals of this kind, in this way presented, in this way prepared for, cannot enrich life, because they are wanting in all the elements of personal contact. Wholly dreamlike and vaporous, they end by breeding nothing but cynicism and chagrin; and

in becoming permanently catalogued in the mind as impracticable they lead to a belief in the essential unreality of ideas as well.

Indeed there is nothing so tragic and so ominous as the familiar saying that college is the happiest time of one's life. Yet perhaps a majority of college men think of their college life in this way. They deliberately put their Golden Age behind them—and, as things are, they know it is behind them. But consider what a comment this is on the American university itself,—a place, one can fairly say, where ideals are cherished precisely because they are ineffectual, because they are ineptly and mournfully beautiful, because they make one cynical, because they make life progressively uninteresting, because, practically and in effect, they are illusions and frauds and infinitely charming lies. There surely is the last and the most impenetrable stronghold of Puritanism, refined to the last degree of intangibility, which persists in making the world a world inevitably sordid, basely practical, and whose very definition of the ideal consequently is, that which has no connection with the world!

Thus far then for our typical university graduate. He has been consistently educated in twin values which are incompatible. The theoretical atmosphere in which he has lived is one that bears no relation to society, the practical atmosphere in which he has lived bears no relation to ideals. Theory has become for him permanently a world in itself, a kind of *ding an sich;* practice has become simply a world of dollars.

Now supposing he has already become interested in the study, let us say, of economics, three paths are open to him: either he can give himself once for all to economics, or he can go the way of all flesh, i.e., into business, or he can hesitate between the two, becoming an economist for the time being and eventually going into business.

It is just here, at the moment of choice, that the want of ballast in his education becomes manifest. There is nothing for him but to lurch violently to the one extreme or the other; and this, according as there is in his nature a crude preponderance

either of intellect or of the sense of action, he does. If he is preponderantly intellectual he adopts the first course; that is to say, he dedicates himself to the service of a type of economic theory that bears no relation to this wicked world at all, leaving all the good people who are managing the economic practice of society (and, for the want of him, chiefly muddling it)—leaving all these good people to talk nonsense in the wilderness. If he is preponderantly a man of action, he adopts the second course; that is to say, he dedicates himself to the service of a private end which knows nothing of theory, which is most cynically contemptuous of ideals, flatulent or other, and which is precisely as indifferent to the economic life of society as the professor of economics himself.

Well, good riddance to both of them, one might be inclined to say, except that on second thought the professor and the business man between them hold in their hands so great a part of human destiny. It is the third case that is really interesting and really tragic. For just so far as our typical student is a normal man, just so far as he shares the twin elements of intellect and action in equal parts, just so far will he be on the fence. The probability is that in this case he will become a professor for as long as he can stand it and then burst into business and become a first-rate millionaire as quickly as possible. The sense of action in him will rebel against the sense of theory and finding in theory no basis for action, no relation to action, will press him into a fresh life where the theoretical side of his nature will at least be of some slight use in furthering his own aggrandizement, and that alone.

V

It is perhaps just as well that Cervantes lived and died in Spain three hundred years ago. Had he been born an American of the twentieth century he might have found the task of satire an all too overwhelming one. Yet his fable, which has its personal bearing in all men always, has in America a social bearing

that is perhaps unique. Don Quixote is the eternal "Highbrow" under a polite name, just as Sancho Panza is the eternal "Lowbrow"; and if the adorable Dulcinea is not a vision of the night and a daily goal in the mind of our professors, then there is no money in Wall Street. One admits the charm of both extremes, the one so fantastically above, the other so fantastically below the level of right reason; to have any kind of relish for muddled humanity is necessarily to feel the charm of both extremes. But where is all that is real, where is personality and all its works, if it is not essentially somewhere, somehow, in some not very vague way, between?

WHAT IS A PURITAN? *

STUART P. SHERMAN

(Stuart P. Sherman, for many years professor of English at the University of Illinois, now editor of the New York *Herald-Tribune Books,* came before the public in 1917 as the author of *On Contemporary Literature.* These essays were chiefly upon English men of letters. In more recent volumes, *Americans* and *The Genius of America,* he has given his attention to our native literature. Of Whitman and Mark Twain, of Franklin and Emerson, he has written with an unusual sympathy that springs from an impelling conviction of their American nationality and their belief in a democratic society.

In his essay on the Puritan Mr. Sherman seeks to give a wholesome continuity to the development of American society by showing that our traditions should be rediscovered and redefined instead of being, if possible, abruptly discarded. He turns to old documents and to the biographies of English and American Puritans of past ages, in order to prove that they were not the opinionated misanthropes that "the younger generation" is prone to regard them. Instead, he finds that though they were not demonstrative, they frequently possessed an unusual tenderness of feeling. But it is the principles which guided them that he is at pains to emphasize; for he regards them as essential to the sound development of our society. The Puritan would censure our thoughtless self-indulgence by reminding us that we should desire not to be masterless but our own masters. "Bear thou henceforth the sceptre of thine own control through life and the

* From *The Genius of America.* Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924.

passion of life." The achievement either of amiability or of testiness in disposition is not of much significance to these Puritans. They are absorbed in the more important work of directing their own lives toward their own ideal.)

WHAT IS A PURITAN?

THE first step towards making Puritanism beautiful is to free the word from exclusive association with the manners and morals of any particular period. Puritanism is not a fixed form of life; it is a formative spirit, an urgent, exploring and creative spirit. And so the shape of the Puritan cannot be cast in bronze for all time. He is an iconoclast, an image-breaker; and when he is convicted of self-idolatry, he is the first, beautiful and strong in wrath, to raise the hammer and shatter his own image. Strike at the shadowy incarnations of him around the witch fires of history: he offers you a sharper sword. A hard man in this or any age to keep pace with or to understand.

Both the contemporary and the historical Puritan are still involved in clouds of libel, of which the origins lie in the copious fountains of indiscriminating abuse poured out upon the Puritans of the seventeenth century by great Royalist writers like Butler, Dryden, and Ben Jonson. The Puritan of that day was ordinarily represented by his adversaries as a dishonest casuist and a hypocrite. To illustrate this point, I will produce a brilliantly malevolent portrait from Jonson's comedy, *Bartholomew Fair*.

This play was performed in London six years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth; and it helps one to understand why the migratory movement of the day was rather to than from America. Jonson presents a group of Puritans visiting the Fair. Their names are Zeal-of-the-land Busy, Dame Purecraft, and Win-the-fight Little-wit and his wife. Roast pig is a main feature of the Bartholomew festivities; and the wife of Win-the-fight Little-wit feels a strong inclination to partake of it. Her mother, Dame Purecraft, has some scruples about eating in the tents of wickedness, and carries the question to Zeal-of-the-land Busy, ask-

ing him to resolve their doubts. At first he replies adversely, in the canting, sing-song nasal fashion then attributed to the Puritans by their enemies:—

"Verily for the disease of longing, it is a disease, a carnal disease, or appetite . . . and as it is carnal and incident, it is natural, very natural; now pig, it is a meat, and a meat that is nourishing and may be longed for, and so consequently eaten; it may be eaten; very exceedingly well eaten; but in the Fair, and as a Bartholomew pig, it cannot be eaten; for the very calling it a Bartholomew pig, and to eat it so, is a spice of idolatry, and you make the Fair no better than one of the high-places. This, I take it, is the state of the question: a high-place."

Master Little-wit remonstrates, saying, "But in state of necessity, place should give place, Master Busy." And Dame Purecraft cries: "Good Brother Zeal-of-the-land Busy, think to make it as lawful as you can."

Thereupon, Zeal-of-the-land Busy reconsiders, as follows:—

"Surely, it may be otherwise, but it is subject to construction, subject, and hath a face of offence with the weak, a great face, a foul face; but that face may have a veil put over it, and be shadowed as it were; it may be eaten, and in the Fair, I take it, in a booth, the tents of the Wicked: the place is not much, not very much, we may be religious in the midst of the profane, so it be eaten with a reformed mouth, with sobriety and humbleness; not gorged in with gluttony or greediness, there's the fear: for, should she go there, as taking pride in the place, or delight in the unclean dressing, to feed the vanity of the eye, or lust of the palate, it were not well, it were not fit, it were abominable and not good."

Finally, Zeal-of-the-land Busy not only consents, but joins the rest, saying, "In the way of comfort to the weak, I will go and eat. I will eat exceedingly and prophesy; there may be a good use made of it too, now I think on it: by the public eating of swine's flesh, to profess our hate and loathing of Judaism, whereof

the brethren stand taxed. I will therefore eat, yea, I will eat exceedingly."

The entire passage might be regarded as a satirical interpretation of Calvin's chapter on Christian Liberty. In this fashion the anti-Puritan writers of the seventeenth century habitually depicted the people who set up the Commonwealth in England and colonized Massachusetts. In the eyes of unfriendly English contemporaries, the men who came over in the *Mayflower* and their kind were unctuous hypocrites.

That charge, though it has been revived for modern uses, no longer stands against the seventeenth-century Puritans. Under persecution and in power, on the scaffold, in war, and in wilderness, they proved that, whatever their faults, they were animated by a passionate sincerity. When the Puritan William Prynne spoke disrespectfully of magistrates and bishops, Archbishop Laud, or his agents, cut off his ears and threw him back into prison. As soon as he could get hold of ink and paper, Prynne sent out from prison fresh attacks on the bishops. They took him out and cut off his ears again, and branded him "S.L.," which they intended to signify "Seditious Libeller"; but he, with the iron still hot in his face and with indignation inspiring, perhaps, the most dazzling pun ever recorded, interpreted the letters to mean, *Stigmata Laudis*. When the Puritans came into power, Prynne issued from his dungeon and helped cut off, not the ears, but the head of Archbishop Laud. After that, less was said about his insincerity. Prynne and his friends had their faults; but lack of conviction and the courage of their conviction were not among them.

When, a hundred years ago, Macaulay wrote his famous passage on the Puritans in the essay on Milton, he tried to do them justice; and he did brush aside the traditional charge of hypocrisy with the contempt which it deserves. But in place of the picture of the oily hypocrite, he set up another picture equally questionable. He painted the Puritan as a kind of religious superman of incredible fortitude and determination, who "went through

the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities, insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain, not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier."

Now this portrait of Macaulay's is executed with far more respect for the Puritan character than Jonson exhibited in his portrait of Zeal-of-the-land Busy. But it is just as clearly a caricature. It violently exaggerates certain harsh traits of individual Puritans under persecution and at war; it suppresses all the mild and attractive traits; and Carlyle, with his hero-worship and his eye on Cromwell, continues the exaggeration in the same direction. It gives an historically false impression, because it conveys the idea that the Puritans were exceptionally harsh and intolerant *as compared with other men in their own times.*

For example, the supposedly harsh Puritan Cromwell stood for a wide latitude of religious opinion and toleration of sects at a time when the Catholic Inquisition had established a rigid censorship and was persecuting Huguenots and Mohammedans and Jews, and torturing and burning heretics wherever its power extended. It is customary now to point to the Salem witchcraft and the hanging of three Quakers in Boston—who incidentally seem to have insisted on being hanged—as signal illustrations of the intolerance of Puritanism and its peculiar fanaticism. But, as a matter of fact, these things were merely instances of a comparatively *mild* infection of the Puritans by a madness that swept over the world. In Salem there were twenty victims, and the madness lasted one year. In Europe there were hundreds of thousands of victims; and there were witches burned in Catholic Spain, years after the practice of executing witches had been condemned among the Puritans. Comparatively speaking, the Puritans were quick to discard and condemn the common harshness and intolerance of their times.

The Puritan leaders in the seventeenth century were, like all leaders, exceptional men; but if looked at closely, they exhibit

the full complement of human qualities, and rather more than less than average respect for the rights and the personality of the individual, since their doctrines, political and religious, immensely emphasized the importance and sacredness of the individual life. They had iron enough in their blood to put duty before pleasure; but that does not imply that they banished pleasure. They put goodness above beauty; but that does not mean that they despised beauty. It does not set them apart as a peculiar and abnormal people. In every age of the world, in every progressing society, there is, there has to be, a group, and a fairly large group, of leaders and toilers to whom their own personal pleasure is a secondary consideration—a consideration secondary to the social welfare and the social advance. On the long slow progress of the race out of Egypt into the Promised Land, they prepare the line of march, they look after the arms and munitions, they bring up the supplies, they scout out the land, they rise up early in the morning, they watch at night, they bear the burdens of leadership, while the children, the careless young people, and the old people who have never grown up, are playing or fiddling or junketing on the fringes of the march. They are never popular among these who place pleasure first; for they are always rounding up stragglers, recalling loiterers, and preaching up the necessity of toil and courage and endurance. They are not popular; but they are not inhuman. The violet smells to them as it does to other men; and rest and recreation are as sweet. I must illustrate a little the more intimately human aspect of our seventeenth-century group.

It is a part of the plot of our droll and dry young people to throw the opprobrium of the present drought upon the Puritans. These iron men, one might infer from reading the discourses, for example, of Mr. Mencken, banished wine as a liquor inconsistent with Calvinistic theology, though, to be sure, Calvin himself placed it among "matters indifferent." The Puritans, as a matter of fact, used both wine and tobacco—both men and women. If Puritanism means reaction in favor of obsolete standards, our

contemporary Puritans will repeal the obnoxious amendment; and all who are thirsty should circulate the Puritan literature of the seventeenth century. Read your *Pilgrim's Progress*, and you will find that Christian's wife, on the way to salvation, sent her child back after her bottle of liquor. Read Winthrop's letters, and you will find that Winthrop's wife writes to him to thank him for the tobacco that he has sent to her mother. Read Mather's diary, and you will find that he suggests pious thoughts to be meditated upon by members of his household while they are engaged in home brewing. Read the records of the first Boston church, and you will find that one of the first teachers was a wine seller. Read the essays of John Robinson, first pastor of the Pilgrims, and you will find that he ridicules Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver, for ordering the vines cut down, merely "because men were sometimes drunken with the grapes." Speaking of celibacy, Robinson says, "Abstinence from marriage is no more a virtue than abstinence from wine or other pleasing natural thing. Both marriage and wine are of God and good in themselves."

Since I do not wish to incite a religious and Puritanical resistance to the Volstead Act, I must add that Robinson, in that tone of sweet reasonableness which characterizes all his essays, remarks further: "Yet may the abuse of a thing be so common and notorious and the use so small and needless as better want the small use than be in continual danger of the great abuse." And this, I suppose, is exactly the ground taken by the sensible modern prohibitionist. It is not a matter of theological sin with him at all. It never was that. When it is not a question of health, it is now a matter of economics and æsthetics, and of the greatest happiness and freedom to the greatest number.

These iron men are accused of being hostile to beauty, the charge being based upon the crash of a certain number of stained-glass windows and altar ornaments, which offended them, however, not as art, but as religious symbolism. Why fix upon the riot of soldiers in war-time and neglect to inquire: Who, after the death of Shakespeare, in all the seventeenth century, most

eloquently praised music and the drama? Who most lavishly described and most exquisitely appreciated nature? Who had the richest literary culture and the most extensive acquaintance with poetry? Who published the most magnificent poems? The answer to all these questions is, of course, that conspicuous Puritan, the Latin secretary to Oliver Cromwell, John Milton.

In a letter to an Italian friend, Milton writes: "God has instilled into me, if into anyone, a vehement love of the beautiful. Not with so much labor is Ceres said to have sought her daughter Proserpine, as it is my habit day and night to seek for this idea of the beautiful . . . through all the forms and faces of things." With some now nearly obsolete notions of precedence, Milton did place God before the arts. But was he hostile to the arts? The two most important sorts of people in the state, he declares, are, first, those who make the social existence of the citizens "just and holy," and, second, those who make it "splendid and beautiful." He insists that the very stability of the state depends upon the splendor and excellence of its public institutions and the splendid and excellent expression of its social life—depends, in short, as, I have insisted, upon the cooperation of the Puritans and the artists, upon the integrity of the national genius.

These iron men are said to have been devoid of tenderness and sympathy in personal relations. But this does not agree with the testimony of Bradford, who records it in his history that, in the first winter at Plymouth, when half the colony had died and most of the rest were sick, Myles Standish and Brewster, and the four or five others who were well, watched over and waited on the rest with the loving tenderness and the unflinching fidelity of a mother.

These people had fortitude; but was it due to callousness? Were they really, as Macaulay intimates, insensible to their own sufferings and the sufferings of others? Hear the cry of John Bunyan when prison separates him from his family: "The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from my bone; and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these great mercies, but also

because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them, *especially my poor blind child*, who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. O the thought of the hardship I thought my blind one might go under, would break my heart to pieces."

Finally, these iron men are grievously charged with a lack of romantic feeling and the daring necessary to act upon it. Much depends upon what you mean by romance. If you mean by romance, a life of excitement and perilous adventure, there are duller records than that of the English Puritans. Not without some risk to themselves, not without at least an occasional thrill, did these pious villagers decapitate the King of England, overturn the throne of the Archbishop of Canterbury, pull up stakes and settle in Holland, sail the uncharted Atlantic in a cockleshell, and set up a kingdom for Christ in the howling wilderness. I don't think that dwellers in Gopher Prairie or Greenwich Village have a right to call that life precisely humdrum.

Add to this the fact that the more fervent Puritans were daily engaged in a terrifically exciting adventure with Jehovah. Some women of to-day would think it tolerably interesting, I should suppose, to be married to a man like Cotton Mather, who rose every day after breakfast, went into his study, put, as he said, his sinful mouth in the dust of his study floor, and, while the tears streamed from his eyes, conversed directly with angels, with "joy unspeakable and full of glory." If a Puritan wife was pious, she was engaged in a true "eternal triangle"; when Winthrop left home, his wife was committed by him to the arms of her heavenly lover. If she were not pious, she stole the records of his conversation with angels, and went, like Mather's wife, into magnificent fits of jealousy against the Lord of Hosts. The resulting atmosphere may not have been ideal; but it is not to be described as "sullen gloom"; it was not humdrum like a Dreiser novel; it was tense with the excitement of living on the perilous edge of Paradise.

Did these Puritan husbands lack charm, or devotion to their

women? I find that theory hard to reconcile with the fact that so many of them had three wives. Most of us modern men feel that we have charm enough, if we can obtain and retain one, now that higher education of women has made them so exacting in their standards and so expensive to maintain. Now, Cotton Mather had three wives; and when he was forty or so, in the short interim between number two and number three, he received a proposal of marriage from a girl of twenty, who was, he thought, the wittiest and the prettiest girl in the colony. I conclude inevitably that there was something very attractive in Cotton Mather. Call it charm; call it what you will; he possessed that which the *Ladies' Home Journal* would describe as "What women admire in men."

As a further illustration of the "sullen gloom of their domestic habits," take the case of John Winthrop, the pious Puritan governor of Massachusetts. After a truly religious courtship, he married his wife, about 1618, against the wishes of her friends. We have some letters of the early years of their life together, in which he addresses her as "My dear wife," "My sweet wife," and "My dear wife, my chief joy in his world." Well, that is nothing; at first, we all do that.

But ten years later Winthrop prepared to visit New England, without his family, to found a colony. While waiting for his ship to sail, he writes still to his wife by every possible messenger, merely to tell her that she is his chief joy in all the world; and before he leaves England he arranges with her that, as long as he is away, every week on Tuesday and Friday at five o'clock he and she shall think of each other wherever they are, and commune in spirit. When one has been married ten or twelve long years, that is more extraordinary. It shows, I think, romantic feeling equal to that in *Miss Lulu Bett,* or *Poor White,* or *Moon-Calf.*

Finally, I will present an extract from a letter of this same John Winthrop to this same wife, written in 1637, when they had

been married twenty years. It is an informal note, written hurriedly, in the rush of business:—

SWEETHEART,—

I was unwillingly hindered from coming to thee, nor am I like to see thee before the last day of this weeke: therefore I shall want a band or two: and cuffs. I pray thee also send me six or seven leaves of tobacco dried and powdered. Have care of thyself this cold weather, and speak to the folks to keep the goats well out of the garden. . . . If any letters be come for me, send them by this bearer. I will trouble thee no further. The Lord bless and keep thee, my sweet wife, and all our family; and send us a comfortable meeting. So I kiss thee and love thee ever and rest

Thy faithful husband,

JOHN WINTHROP.

If, three hundred years after my death, it is proved by documentary evidence that twenty years after my marriage I still, in a familiar note, mixed up love and kisses with my collars and tobacco—if this is proved, I say, I shall feel very much surprised if the historian of that day speaks of the "sullen gloom of my domestic habits."

But now, three hundred years after Winthrop's time, what is actually being said about the Puritans? In spite of abundant evidences such as I have exhibited, our recent Pilgrim celebration was a rather melancholy affair. From the numerous commemoratory articles which I have read, I gather that there are only three distinct opinions about the Puritan now current—every one of them erroneous.

The first, held by a small apologetic group of historians and *Mayflower* descendants, is, that the Puritan was a misguided man of good intentions. Since he was a forefather and has long been dead, he should be spoken of respectfully; and it is proper from time to time to drop upon his grave a few dried immortelles. The second opinion is, that the Puritan was an unqualified pest, but that he is dead and well dead, and will trouble us no more forever. The third, and by far the most prevalent, is that the

Puritan was once a pest, but has now become a menace; that he is more alive than ever, more baleful, more dangerous.

This opinion is propagated in part by old New Englanders like Mr. Brooks Adams, who have turned upon their ancestors with a vengeful fury, crying, "Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum." And I noticed only the other day that Mr. Robert Herrick was speaking remorsefully of Puritanism as an "ancestral blight" in his veins. But the opinion is still more actively propagated by a literary group which comes out flatfootedly against the living Puritan as the enemy of freedom, of science, of beauty, of romance; as a being with unbreakable belief in his own bleak and narrow views; a Philistine, a hypocrite, a tyrant, of savage cruelty of attack, with a lust for barbarous persecution, and of intolerable dirty-mindedness.

Despite the "plank" of universal sympathy in the rather hastily constructed literary platform of these young people, it is manifest that they are out to destroy the credit of the Puritan in America. We are not exceptionally rich in spiritual traditions. It would be a pity, by a persistent campaign of abuse, to ruin the credit of any good ones. One of the primary functions, indeed, of scholarship and letters is to connect us with the great traditions and to inspire us with the confidence and power which result from such a connection. Puritanism, rightly understood, is one of the vital, progressive, and enriching human traditions. It is a tradition peculiarly necessary to the health and the stability and the safe forward movement of a democratic society. When I consider from what antiquity it has come down to us and what vicissitudes it has survived, I do not fear its extermination; but I resent the misapprehension of its character and the aspersion of its name. Perhaps our insight into its true nature may be strengthened and our respect renewed, if we revisit its source and review its operations at some periods a little remote from the dust and diatribes of contemporary journalism.

A good many ages before Rome was founded, or Athens, or ancient Troy, or Babylon, or Nineveh, there was an umbrageous

banyan tree in India, in whose wide-spreading top and populous branches red and blue baboons, chimpanzees, gorillas, orang-outangs, and a missing group of anthropoid apes had chattered and fought and flirted and feasted and intoxicated themselves on cocoanut wine for a thousand years. At some date which I can't fix with accuracy, the clatter and mess and wrangling of arboreal simian society began to pall on the heart of one of the anthropoid apes. He was not happy. He was afflicted with ennui. He felt stirring somewhere in the region of his diaphragm a yearning and capacity for a new life. His ideas were vague; but he resolved to make a break for freedom and try an experiment. He crawled nervously out to the end of his branch, followed by a few of his friends, hesitated a moment; then exclaimed abruptly: "Here's where I get off," dropped to the ground, lighted on his feet, and amid a pelting of decayed fruit and cocoanut shells and derisive shouts of "precisian" and "hypocrite," walked off on his hind-legs into another quarter of the jungle and founded the human race. That was the first Puritan.

In the beginning, he had only a narrow vision; for his eyes were set near together, as you will see if you examine his skull in the museum. He had a vision of a single principle, namely, that he was to go upright, instead of on all fours. But he gradually made that principle pervade all his life; for he resolutely refrained from doing anything that he could not do while going upright. As habit ultimately made the new posture easy and natural, he found that there were compensations in it; for he learned to do all sorts of things in the erect attitude that he could not do, even with the aid of his tail, while he went on all-fours. So he began to rejoice in what he called "the new freedom." But to the eyes of the denizens of the banyan tree, he looked very ridiculous. They called him stiff-necked, strait-laced, unbending, and inflexible. They swarmed into his little colony of come-outers, on all fours, and began to play their monkey-tricks. He met them gravely and said: "Walk upright, as the rest of us do, and you may stay and share alike with us. Otherwise, out

you go." And out some of them went, back to the banyan tree; and there, with the chimpanzees and the red and blue baboons, they still chatter over their cocoanut wine, and emit from time to time a scream of simian rage, and declare their straight-backed relative a tyrant, a despot, and a persecutor of his good old four-footed cousins.

You may say that this is only a foolish fable. But it contains all the essential features of the eternal Puritan: namely, dissatisfaction with the past, courage to break sharply from it, a vision of a better life, readiness to accept a discipline in order to attain that better life, and a serious desire to make that better life prevail—a desire reflecting at once his sturdy individualism and his clear sense for the need of social solidarity. In these respects all true Puritans, in all ages and places of the world, are alike. Every one is dissatisfied with the past; every one has the courage necessary to revolt; every one has a vision; every one has a discipline; and every one desires his vision of the better life to prevail.

How do they differ among themselves? They differ in respect to the breadth and the details of their vision. Their vision is determined by the width of their eyes and by the lights of their age. According to the laws of human development, some of the lights go out from time to time, or grow dim, and new lights appear, and the vision changes from age to age.

What does not change in the true Puritan is the passion for improvement. What does not change is the immortal urgent spirit that breaks from the old forms, follows the new vision, seriously seeks the discipline of the higher life. When you find a man who is quite satisfied with the past and with the routine and old clothes of his ancestors, who has not courage for revolt and adventure, who cannot accept the discipline and hardship of a new life, and who does not really care whether the new life prevails, you may be sure that he is not a Puritan.

But who are the Puritans? Aristotle recognized that there is an element of the Puritan in every man, when he declared that all

things, by an intuition of their own nature, seek their perfection. He classified the desire for perfection as a fundamental human desire. Still, we have to admit that in many men it must be classified as a victoriously suppressed desire. We can recognize men as Puritans only when they have released and expressed their desire for perfection.

Leopardi declared that Jesus was the first to condemn the world as evil, and to summon his followers to come out from it, in order to found a community of the pure in heart. But this is an historical error. Unquestionably Jesus was a Puritan in relation to a corrupt Jewish tradition and in relation to a corrupt and seriously adulterated pagan tradition. But every great religious and moral leader, Christian or pagan, has likewise been a Puritan: Socrates, Plato, Zeno, Confucius, Buddha. Every one of them denounced the world, asked his followers to renounce many of their instinctive ways, and to accept a rule and discipline of the better life—a rule involving a purification by the suppression of certain impulses and the liberation of others.

There is much talk of the austerities of the Puritan households of our forefathers, austerities which were largely matters of necessity. But two thousand years before these forefathers, there were Greek Stoics, and Roman Stoics, and Persian and Hindu ascetics, who were far more austere, and who practised the ascetic life from choice as the better life. There is talk as if Protestant Calvinism had suddenly in modern times introduced the novel idea of putting religious duty before gratification of the senses. But a thousand years before Knox and Calvin, there were Roman Catholic monasteries and hermitages, where men and women, with a vision of a better life, mortified the flesh far more bitterly than the Calvinists ever dreamed of doing. If contempt of earthly beauty and earthly pleasure were the work of Puritanism, then the hermit saints of Catholicism who lived before Calvin should be recognized as the model Puritans. But the hermit saint lacks that passion for making his vision prevail, lacks that practical sense of the need for social solidarity, which are eminent charac-

teristics of the true Puritan, both within and without the Roman Church.

In the early Middle Ages the Roman Church, which also had a strong sense of the need for social solidarity, strove resolutely to keep the Puritans, whom it was constantly developing, within its fold and to destroy those who escaped. If I follow the course of those who successfully left the fold, it is not because many did not remain within; it is because the course of those who came out led them more directly to America.

In the fourteenth century, John Wycliffe, the first famous English Puritan, felt that the Roman Church had become hopelessly involved with the "world" on the one hand, and with unnatural, and therefore unchristian, austerities on the other, and that, in both ways, it had lost the purity of the early Christian vision of the better life. To obtain freedom for the better life, he became convinced that one must come out from the Roman Church, and must substitute for the authority of the pope the authority of the Bible as interpreted by the best scholarship of the age. He revolted, as he thought, in behalf of a life, not merely more religious, but also more actively and practically moral, and intellectually more honest. For him, accepting certain traditional doctrines meant acquiescence in ignorance and superstition. His followers, with the courage characteristic of their tradition, burned at the stake rather than profess faith in a "feigned miracle." True forerunners, they were, of the man of science who "follows truth wherever it leads."

A hundred and fifty years later the English Church as a whole revolted from the Roman, on essentially the grounds taken by Wycliffe; and under Mary its scholars and ministers by scores burned at the stake for their vision of the better life, which included above all what they deemed intellectual integrity. At that time, the whole English Church was in an essentially Puritan mood, dissatisfied with the old, eager to make the new vision prevail, fearless with the courage of the new learning, elate with the sense of national purification and intellectual progress.

But the word Puritan actually came into use first after the Reformation. It was applied in the later sixteenth century to a group within the English Church which thought that the national church had still insufficiently purged itself of Roman belief and ritual. Among things which they regarded as merely traditional and unscriptural, and therefore unwarrantable, was the government of the church by bishops, archdeacons, deacons, and the rest—the Anglican hierarchy. And when these officers began to suppress their protests, these Puritans began to feel that the English Church was too much involved with the world to permit them freedom for the practice of the better life. Accordingly, in the seventeenth century, they revolted as nonconformists or as separatists; and drew off into religious communities by themselves, with church governments of representative or democratic character, the principles of which were soon to be transferred to political communities.

If I recall here what is very familiar, it is to emphasize the swift, unresting onward movement of the Puritan vision of the good life. The revolt against the bishops became a revolution which shook the pillars of the Middle Ages and prepared the way for modern times. The vision, as it moves, broadens and becomes more inclusive. For the seventeenth-century Puritan, the good life is not merely religious, moral, and intellectual; it is also, in all affairs of the soul, a self-governing life. It is a free life, subject only to divine commands which each individual has the right to interpret for himself. The Puritan minister had, to be sure, a great influence; but the influence was primarily due to his superior learning. And the entire discipline of the Puritans tended steadily towards raising the congregation to the level of the minister. Their daily use of the Bible, their prompt institution of schools and universities, and the elaborate logical discourses delivered from the pulpits constituted a universal education for independent and critical free-thought.

Puritanism made every man a reasoner. And much earlier than is generally recognized, the Puritan mind began to appeal

from the letter to the spirit of Scripture, from Scripture to scholarship, and from scholarship to the verdict of the philosophic reason. Says the first pastor of the Pilgrims: "He that hath a right philosophical spirit and is but morally honest would rather suffer many deaths than call a pin a point or speak the least thing against his understanding or persuasion." In John Robinson we meet a man with a deep devotion to the truth, and also with the humility to recognize clearly that he possesses but a small portion of truth. He conceives, indeed, of a truth behind the Bible itself, a truth which may be reached by other means than the Scripture, and which was not beyond the ken of the wise pagans. "All truth," he declares, "is of God. . . . Whereupon it followeth that nothing true in right reason and sound philosophy can be false in divinity. . . . I add, though the truth be uttered by the devil himself, yet it is originally of God."

The delightful aspects of this "Biblical Puritan," besides the sweetness of his charity and his tolerance, are his lively perception that truth is something growing, steadily revealing itself, breaking upon us like a dawn; and, not less significant, his recognition that true religions must be in harmony with reason and experience. "Our Lord Christ," he remarks—quietly yet memorably—"calls himself truth, *not custom.*"

Cotton Mather, partly because of his connection with the witchcraft trials, has been so long a synonym for the unlovely features of the culture of his time and place, that even his biographer and the recent editors of his journal have quite failed to bring out the long stride that he made towards complete freedom of the mind. If the truth be told, Mather, like every Puritan of powerful original force, was something of a "heretic." For many years he followed a plainly mystical "inner light." His huge diary opens in 1681 with a statement that he has come to a direct agreement with the Lord Jesus Christ, and that no man or book, but the spirit of God, has shown him the way. He goes directly to the several persons of the Trinity, and transacts his business with them or with their ministering angels. There

is an "enthusiastic" element here; but one should observe that it is an emancipative element.

Experience, however, taught Mather a certain distrust of the mystical inner light. Experience with witches taught him a certain wariness of angels. In 1711, after thirty years of active service in the church, Mather writes in his diary this distinctly advanced criterion for inspiration:—

"There is a thought which I have often had in my mind; but I would now lay upon my mind a charge to have it oftener there: that the light of reason is the law of God; the voice of reason is the voice of God; we never have to do with reason, but at the same time we have to do with God; our submission to the rules of reason is an obedience to God. Let me as often as I have evident reason set before me, think upon it; the great God now speaks to me."

Our judgment of Mather's vision must depend upon what reason told Mather to do. Well, every day of his life reason told Mather to undertake some good for his fellow men. At the beginning of each entry in his diary for a long period of years stand the letters "G. D.," which mean Good Designed for that day. "And besides all this," he declares, "I have scarce at any time, for these five-and-forty years and more, so come as to stay in any company without considering whether no good might be done before I left it." One sees in Mather a striking illustration of the Puritan passion for making one's vision of the good life prevail. "It has been a maxim with me," he says, "that a power to do good not only gives a right unto it, but also makes the doing of it a duty. I have been made very sensible that by pursuing of this maxim, I have entirely ruined myself as to this world and rendered it really too hot a place for me to continue in."

Mather has here in mind the crucial and heroic test of his Puritan spirit. Towards the end of his life, in 1721, an epidemic of smallpox swept over Boston. It was generally interpreted

by the pious as a visitation of God. Mather, a student of science as well as of the Bible, had read in the *Transactions of the Royal Society* reports of successful inoculation against smallpox practised in Africa and among the Turks. He called the physicians of Boston together, explained the method, and recommended their experimenting with it. He also published pamphlets in favor of inoculation. He was violently attacked as opposing the decrees of God. In the face of a storm of opposition he inoculated his own child, who nearly died of the treatment. None the less, he persisted, and invited others to come into his house and receive the treatment, among them a fellow minister. Into the room where the patient lay, was thrown a bomb intended for Mather, which failed, however, to explode. To it was attached this note: "Cotton Mather, you dog, damn you; I'll inoculate you with this, with a pox to you!"

Mather stood firm, would not be dissuaded, even courted martyrdom for the new medical truth. "I had rather die," he said, "by such hands as now threaten my life than by a fever; and much rather die for my conformity to the blessed Jesus in essays to save life than for some truths, tho' precious ones, to which many martyrs testified formerly in the flames of Smithfield."

Here, then, please observe, is the free Puritan mind in revolt, courageously insisting on making his new vision of the good life prevail, resolutely undertaking the discipline and dangers of experiment, and, above all, seeking what he calls the will of the "blessed Jesus," not in the Bible, but in a medical report of the Royal Society; thus fulfilling the spirit of Robinson's declaration that "Our Lord Christ calls himself truth, *not custom*"; and illustrating Robinson's other declaration that true religion cannot conflict with right reason and sound experience. In Mather, the vision of the good life came to mean a rational and practical beneficence in the face of calumny and violence. For his conduct on this occasion, he deserves to have his sins forgiven, and to be ranked and remembered as a hero of the modern spirit.

He hoped that his spirit would descend to his son; but the

full stream of his bold and original moral energy turned elsewhere. There was a Boston boy of Puritan ancestry, who had sat under Cotton Mather's father, who had heard Cotton Mather preach in the height of his power, and who said years afterward that reading Cotton Mather's book, *Essays to do Good,* "gave me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good,* than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been . . . a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book." This boy had a strong common sense. To him, as to Mather, right reason seemed the rule of God and the voice of God.

He grew up in Boston under Mather's influence, and became a free-thinking man of the world, entirely out of sympathy with strait-laced and stiff-necked upholders of barren rites and ceremonies. I am speaking of the greatest liberalizing force in eighteenth-century America, Benjamin Franklin.* Was he a Puritan? Perhaps no one thinks of him as such. Yet we see that he was born and bred in the bosom of Boston Puritanism; that he acknowledges its greatest exponent as the prime inspiration of his life. Furthermore, he exhibits all the essential characteristics of the Puritan: dissatisfaction, revolt, a new vision, discipline, and a passion for making the new vision prevail. He represents, in truth, the reaction of a radical, a living Puritanism, to an age of intellectual enlightenment.

Franklin began his independent effort in a revolt against ecclesiastical authority, as narrow and unrealistic. Recall the passage in his Autobiography where he relates his disgust at a sermon preached on the great text in Philippians: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things." Franklin says that, in expounding this text, the minister confined

* In presenting this sketch of the Puritan tradition in America, I apologize for the necessity of reproducing some paragraphs from my essay on Emerson in *Americans.*

himself to five points: keeping the Sabbath, reading the Scriptures, attending public worship, partaking of the sacraments, and respecting the ministers. Franklin recognized at once that there was no moral life in that minister, was "disgusted," and attended his preaching no more. It was the revolt of a living Puritanism from a Puritanism that was dead.

For, note what follows, as the consequence of his break with the church. "It was about this time that I conceived," says Franklin, "the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time, and to conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into." Every one will recall how Franklin drew up his table of the thirteen real moral virtues, and how diligently he exercised himself to attain them. But, for us, the significant feature of his enterprise was the realistic spirit in which it was conceived: the bold attempt to ground the virtues on reason and experience rather than authority; the assertion of his doctrine "that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful, *the nature of man alone considered.*"

Having taken this ground, it became necessary for him to explore the nature of man and the universe. So Puritanism, which, in Robinson and Mather, was predominantly rational, becomes in Franklin predominantly scientific. With magnificent fresh moral force, he seeks for the will of God in nature, and applies his discoveries with immense practical benevolence to ameliorating the common lot of mankind, and to diffusing good-will among men and nations. Light breaks into his mind from every quarter of his century. His vision of the good life includes bringing every faculty of mind and body to its highest usefulness. With a Puritan emancipator like Franklin, we are not obliged to depend, for the opening of our minds, upon subsequent liberators devoid of his high reconstructive seriousness.

I must add just one more name, for the nineteenth century, to the history of our American Puritan tradition. The original

moral force which was in Mather and Franklin passed in the next age into a man who began to preach in Cotton Mather's church, Ralph Waldo Emerson, descendant of many generations of Puritans. The church itself had now become Unitarian; yet, after two or three years of service, Emerson, like Franklin, revolted from the church; the vital force of Puritanism in him impelled him to break from the church in behalf of his vision of sincerity, truth, and actuality. "Whoso would be a man," he declared in his famous essay on Self-Reliance, "must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the *name* of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness."

No American ever lived whose personal life was more exemplary; or who expressed such perfect disdain of outworn formulas and lifeless routine. There is dynamite in his doctrine to burst tradition to fragments, when tradition has become an empty shell. "Every actual state is corrupt," he cries in one of his dangerous sayings; "good men will not obey the laws too well." To good men whose eyes are wide and full of light, there is always breaking a new vision of right reason, which is the will of God, and above the law. Emerson himself broke the Fugitive Slave Law, and in the face of howling Pro-Slavery mobs declared that John Brown would "make the gallows glorious like the cross."

That is simply the political aspect of his radical Puritanism. On the esthetic side, Emerson disregarded the existing conventions of poetry to welcome Walt Whitman, who saluted him as master. Emerson hailed Walt Whitman because Whitman had sought to make splendid and beautiful the religion of a Puritan democracy; and a Puritan democracy is the only kind that we have reason to suppose will endure.

Let these two examples of Emerson's revolt and vision suffice to illustrate the modern operation of the Puritan spirit, its disdain for formalism and routine.

Now, our contemporary leaders of the attack against the modern Puritan declare that modern Puritanism means campaigns of

"snorting and suppression." That, we should now be prepared to assert, is precisely and diametrically opposite to what modern Puritanism means. Modern Puritanism means the release, not the suppression, of power, welcome to new life, revolt from decay and death. With extravagant asceticism, with precisianism, modern Puritanism has nothing whatever to do.

What made the teaching of Emerson, for example, take hold of his contemporaries, what should commend it to us to-day, is just its unfailingly positive character; its relish for antagonisms and difficulty; its precept for the use of the spur; its restoration of ambition to its proper place in the formation of the manly character; its power to free the young soul from the fetters of fear and send him on his course like a thunder-bolt; and, above all, its passion for bringing the whole of life for all men to its fullest and fairest fruit; its passion for emancipating, not merely the religious and moral, but also the intellectual and the political and social and æsthetic capacities of man, so that he may achieve the harmonious perfection of his whole nature, body and soul. To this vision of the good life, Puritanism has come by inevitable steps in its pilgrimage through the ages.

What have I been trying to demonstrate by this long review of the Puritan tradition? This, above all: that the Puritan is profoundly in sympathy with the modern spirit, is indeed the formative force in the modern spirit.

In order to make this point perfectly clear, I must take the liberty of repeating here what I have already said elsewhere by way of a description of the modern spirit:

"A great part of our lives, as we all feel in our educational period, is occupied with learning how to do and to be what others have been and have done before us. But presently we discover that the world is changing around us, and that the secrets of the masters and the experience of our elders do not wholly suffice to establish us effectively in our younger world. We discover within us needs, aspirations, powers, of which the generation that educated us seems unaware, or towards which it

appears to be indifferent, unsympathetic, or even actively hostile. We perceive gradually or with successive shocks of surprise that many things which our fathers declared were true and satisfactory are not at all satisfactory, are by no means true, for us. Then it dawns upon us, perhaps as an exhilarating opportunity, perhaps as a grave and sobering responsibility, that in a little while we ourselves shall be the elders, the responsible generation. Our salvation in the day when we take command will depend, we believe, upon disentanglement from the lumber of heirlooms and hereditary devices, and upon the free, wise use of our own faculties."

At that moment, if we have inherited, not the Puritan heirlooms, but the living Puritan tradition, we enter into the modern spirit. By this phrase I mean, primarily, "the disposition to accept nothing on authority, but to bring all reports to the test of experience. The modern spirit is, first of all, a free spirit open on all sides to the influx of truth, *even from the past*. But freedom is not its only characteristic. The modern spirit is marked, further, by an active curiosity, which grows by what it feeds upon, and goes ever inquiring for fresher and sounder information, not content till it has the best information to be had anywhere. But since it seeks the best, it is, by necessity, also a critical spirit, constantly sifting, discriminating, rejecting, and holding fast that which is good, only till that which is better is within sight. This endless quest, when it becomes central in a life, requires labor, requires pain, requires a measure of courage; and so the modern spirit, with its other virtues, is an heroic spirit. As a reward for difficulties gallantly undertaken, the gods bestow on the modern spirit a kind of eternal youth, with unfailing powers of recuperation and growth."

To enter into this spirit is what the Puritan means by freedom. "He does not, like the false emancipator, merely cut us loose from the old moorings and set us adrift at the mercy of wind and tide. He comes aboard, like a good pilot; and while we trim our sails, he takes the wheel and lays our course for a fresh

voyage. His message when he leaves us is not, 'Henceforth be masterless,' but 'Bear thou henceforth the scepter of thine own control through life and the passion of life.'" If that message still stirs us as with the sound of a trumpet, and frees and prepares us, not for the junketing of a purposeless vagabondage, but for the ardor and discipline and renunciation of a pilgrimage, we are Puritans.

PORTRAIT OF A FAMILY*

OLIVIA HOWARD DUNBAR

(Miss Dunbar's essay is an interesting commentary upon Mr. Sherman's argument that has preceded. Here, she says in effect, is a household that can beautifully display the wholesome perpetuation of the Puritan traditions. It is, indeed, located in rural New England, where the problems of modern society are not unusually alarming. Its members have inherited a certain amount of wealth and a considerable amount of real estate, circumstances which make the retention of traditions less difficult. But no one will question that these people are the natural vessels of their own traditions. The even tenor of their lives, the easy compatibility of their different temperaments, which is the fruit of long practice of tolerance and understanding, a certain gentleness united with high ideals, which are never crudely or ostentatiously brought forward, a determination not only to direct their own lives but to direct them sanely:—these are qualities of the Puritan which Mr. Sherman would have us clutch and carry on. If there is any quality lacking, it is perhaps that, though they have their hands on their several rudders, they do not seems to be heading zestfully for any designated port.)

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PORTRAIT OF A FAMILY

A GROUP of persons of one blood, bound together neither by convention nor inertia but by forces powerfully real, they lived a brilliant challenge to the rapidly crystallizing formulas of revolt against family life. The challenge was undeliberate. They were unconcerned, both as to the fetish of family solidarity and to its advertised decay. But they did achieve an uncommon thing in so uncommon a fashion, theirs is so striking a departure from the stalenesses, and worse, of overemphasized kinship, that one is tempted to dogmatize a little; even to hazard that all mature families who successfully live under one roof without banality or what is euphemistically called adjustment, must share the attributes of this one. However, it is a portrait that I am attempting, not an argument.

If I summon the image of a group of elms—tall, gracious, with a cool, unaccidental beauty, each seeming independently erect yet all at the root inextricably, almost tragically one—it will perhaps become plain that I am writing of a New England family, indeed a family inviolate in blood and tradition. Not, however, with the object of reenforcing the already complete case made out for New England itself—and for Eastern Massachusetts in particular. It is not as types that I write of these New Englanders. Highly individualized as they were, they did not conform to popularized patterns, or conduct themselves to any important degree like their familiar prototypes of fable.

It was apparent enough, for example, that though they were country-bred, their mental range and habit were unprovincial. And though their personalities were full-flavored, the flavor was definitely not that of eccentricity. Yet, as one says it, one recalls the "characters," in the comedy sense, who did flourish in sur-

rounding soil, and familiarly pass in and out of that house of theirs; the scrupulous, always kindly hospitality that welcomed them; the gay, tolerant laughter that followed them out! Moreover, though these dwellers by the shady crossroads had an intelligent "sense of the past," and were content in living at that very spot where their migrating ancestor had settled two centuries and a half before, yet they themselves were emphatically of their own age, unafraid of life, even eager for it—essentially opposed, in fact, to those widely celebrated types whose shadowy lives are spent behind closed shutters, superfluously spreading lavender between yellowing folds of obsolete bed linen.

It may be that no single detail was more significant, in the life of that house by the crossroads, than the gracious, the luxurious length of its days. That was the gait of their life—even, deliberate, confident, with an eye and an ear and a pungent comment for everything by the way. To the rest of the world, time perceptibly long is more or less of a burden. Happy or closely occupied persons usually boast of the apparent shortness of their days. But these days, by some psychological paradox, however conscious one might be of their symmetrical intervals and distances, had not an excessive minute. It is quite literal to say that nobody was ever hurried and nobody ever bored.

It is even true that there were no sleepy or silent or newspaper-devouring members of the family who all the year round partook leisurely of an ample breakfast at seven o'clock. They began the day with all their wits about them, with lively tongues and good appetites. And it was with no air of indifference or languor that those of the younger generation adjourned, afterwards, for at least half an hour's talk in their mother's room, which, being on the ground floor, and looking pleasantly out upon the garden, the flagged walks to the well and gate, and the level blossomy fields beyond, naturally became an auxiliary sitting-room. Real conversations these talks often were, in the classic sense. Never were they mere gossip or perfunctory talk-making. Reminiscence provoked speculation and laughter was lightly un-

locked by either. For the two uncurbed wits in the little group, or for the playful humor of a third, any topic was a sufficient spark—and the delicate old lady sitting up in bed, her still dark hair drawn wavily about her small head after the manner of the early Victorian daguerreotypes, her every sense and faculty blade-keen, would softly lead the laughter.

Then, this first pause over, one began to feel the slow, significant rhythm of the day. An unhurried scattering of the family seemed practically to empty the house, but that was because the efficient domestic machinery was so delicate and soundless. Only the rudest functions, as almost goes without saying, were assigned to that single servant who, whatever her natural capacities, was always a thoroughly subordinated character even in the kitchen to which she was confined. A peculiarly happy place of confinement this kitchen was, hung a little lower than the house itself, its outlook stretching past bending apple trees to the hay fields, its ample sitting space compelling pause, its intermittent fragrances of hot apple pie, or of coffee slowly browning in the oven, always fused with the strong sweet odor of freshly cut wood that poured up from the wood cellar below. Whatever delicate duties were performed here, or upstairs, or in the garden, were suspended by half-past nine or ten, when the morning mail would arrive; and a group would form to read letters aloud or to comment lightly on politics—Republican politics, as a matter of course, since no other were considered mentionable!

You could tell, a few hours later on, after midday dinner, and the lull of early afternoon, that the more definitely social half of the day had begun by the fact that a game of backgammon, which had long ago proved its serviceability as an invalid pastime, would be in progress. Meanwhile, somebody else, sociably sitting nearby at a sun-flooded window, would be engaged upon one of those brilliant feats of virtuosity—undertakings of the sort colloquially known as "ambitious"—to which the sisters' needles were habitually addicted. Their long, capable fingers could never resist the enticement of the unfamiliar, the difficult, the fine; and

this strongly characteristic pride of craftsmanship led them to reach after, and to capture with triumph, all-but-impossible beauties and intricacies of needlework. They were highly "faculties," in the thoroughgoing New England sense. And it may as well be confessed that they felt a lightly tolerant scorn for all clumsy-fingered, as for all dull-witted, folk.

From this hour onward there was of course complete exposure, with no defense whatever, to the visits of such afternoon callers as might gingerly pick their way around the muddy bend by the river, or across the bridge that faced the house, or by the road that led from Flaggy Meadow and "the Neck," or through that short stretch between the elms that brought one from "the school." I cannot say, however, that any visitor ever took the household by surprise, for even when the leafage was thickest, expert glances, piercing it and spanning level fields, could perceive and classify oncomers from any direction. To the cold eyes of childhood, watching these figures remorselessly creep with their slow propriety up the driveway that led to the side door—that is, to the door in actual use—the appalling fact stood forth that they would say only what they had always said, and that they would say it no differently. There seemed, to such eyes, no congruity in their coming at all, these literal dwellers in a literal world, these strangers to Irony and Mirth, which were the gods of that household! A child, however, was quite capable of perceiving that these visitors had an errand through which their friendly feeling was indirectly, even grotesquely, expressed. They were bent on ridding themselves of a burden of ugly rustic prose. Things that weren't mentioned before they came or after they left—sensational ailments, minor calamities, slightly vulgar or slightly cruel little village tales—were mentioned then. Childhood found the atmosphere infinitely freer and sweeter when the household had recovered its strongly individual tone.

It was this tone that prevailed in the evening, though not peculiarly then, for evening was normally a time of waning energy for a family that breakfasted at dawn and filled the

day with miracles of accomplishment. Yet it was the time when the versatile brother, of tender heart and caustic speech, would offer his sharply pointed anecdotes of the day's experience, or strum pleasantly upon banjo or guitar. It was the time when cribbage, briskly played, took the place of backgammon. If an outsider sophisticated enough to enjoy it came in, there was an adroit game of whist.

Have I already sufficiently indicated that there were two main sources of the beautifully unconscious success of this living together of theirs?—one being a certain almost naïve high-mindedness, an unawareness of small, base, selfish ways of life; and the other, their being, to so extraordinary a degree, "good company." This complex charm, I had almost said, this virtue, was a native gift of every member of the family except the father —that silent, smiling, modest man, tender with children, who had his own distinct and winning quality; that patient keeper, in a fine, clear hand, of a meteorological diary; that faithful reader of the *Boston Evening Transcript,* the *Christian Register* (for the strongholds of Unitarianism were nearby), and the cryptic prophecies of the *Farmers' Almanac.*

Impersonal discussion of family conditions could doubtless prove that to yield any reasonable satisfaction, the conventional family arrangement must have a democratic basis, with parents and children so far as possible on an equal footing. This didn't happen to be such a family. It was definitely a dominated one. But the semi-invalid mother's domination was not mere vulgar triumph in a conflict of wills. What happened was that she quietly presented standards that the others accepted and conformed to.

Now an intentional, an even determined, setting of standards, though perhaps as nearly legitimate as domination can be, is doubtless indefensible from the standpoint of complete liberty. I do not defend it. I do insist, however, that in this case it did not result in any effacement of personality. Personality throve. Moreover, the sovereign of this household was too genu-

ine a person to demand surface courtliness. She was not that exhausting type of elderly despot who is in perpetual need of small futile services, who requires from those who address her an entirely special manner. Nor was she ostentatiously motherly, or grandmotherly, or "sweet." The domination I speak of wasn't, in fact, readily discernible. You might have had a fairly intimate view of their life without perceiving how truly the heart of it pulsed within that tall, frail figure with its calm, cool surfaces—surfaces usually bearing a delicate ripple of a kind of mischievous irony.

For the deference of her children was never merely a matter either of conscience or of manners. They deliberately preferred her society, they cared supremely for her approval, they inordinately courted and cherished her judgments. And all this is worthy of remark for two reasons. One is that these children were themselves mature, sane, unsentimental, most obviously free from vagueness or vacillation. The other is that their mother had had, as a matter of fact, far less first-hand experience than they. You could write the history of her life in a paragraph. But it would be a more elaborate matter to picture that native intelligence, kept sharply whetted; that totally uncorrupted native taste for the distinguished and fine (was there an "imitation" of anything on earth, material or immaterial, that could delude her?); that supremely excellent good sense.

It was these qualities that were her rich contribution to the talk that recurred so satisfactorily, so stimulatingly, throughout days that seemed to have a curious finish and elegance, a characteristic air of being lived intentionally instead of by wanton accident. Yet their talk was the very opposite of garrulity or chatter; it was never a mere habit. It was the expression of an active companionableness; the unforced interplay of sympathetic intelligences, of minds that leaped to the flash of each other's wit even if their discretion sometimes winced and gasped a little at the audacious edge of it. It was talk that was incontestably the mark of a successful group life.

Such assertions are all very well. But I am aware that they invite challenge. And it is true that any one picturing the level quiet, the isolation, almost, of their life, might pertinently query what they talked about.

They talked of affairs, in a reasonably large sense. They had, all of them, the urge towards horizons. Their imaginations liked the feel of great names, great places, great distances. This meant that, although they were not a "literary" family, they were pretty constantly engaged with the world of print. And they were readers of a markedly responsive sort, not so much given to passive absorption as to entertainingly sharing their impressions with each other. This was still the period when magazine serials —but chiefly those of which Mr. Howells was the author—were an indispensable feature of family life. Howells in general, and *The Rise of Silas Lapham* in particular, were being read with the delicious zest of fresh discovery. Rather less spontaneously they read Mrs. Humphrey Ward. One was expected to gasp at *Robert Elsmere* in those days. They delighted in Stockton's fantastic humor, and as a matter of course they read and laughed over every word that Miss Wilkins wrote, though I think they felt that her allusions (any one of which could easily be paralleled within the radius of a mile) were too familiar to produce a really lively reaction. But if painstaking pictures of New England left them a little cold, this wasn't the case with the England that at this time none of them had seen. An especially strong sense of racial derivation gave them their fondness for English history and for whatever pages, anywhere, might be devoted to describing British scenes. As for their interest in Queen Victoria and all the wide circle of her descendants, it was almost colonial. The setter of family standards read and quoted Burns continually, as she read and quoted Scott, and also (rather oddly) Moore. Yet, after all, the subject of her most extravagant preference was a local figure. The dicta of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, her day-by-day companion, were adduced to settle the point of any discus-

sion, quite as though he were an accidentally absent member of the family.

Not that they were, any of them, without their lively local interests, personal, historical, geographical. A problem or puzzle of whatever sort had to their mental appetites an especial succulence. I say "they"; but in this particular connection I am thinking of the most agile mind among them—a mind so assimilative and ingenious that years later, coming upon Mr. Bellamy's admirable charades in verse, it vanquished the entire four hundred, a severe test of intelligence! This same quality of mind doubtless accounted for their interest in genealogy. They were continually teased by the knots of forgotten kinships, the loose ends of casually finished lives. To piece these together, to lay them straight, to bind them in sheaves of relationship—all this was an endlessly fascinating exercise and a habitual topic, at least among those of the family most deeply initiate.

They hadn't, very naturally, living when and where they did, the group of interests that to-day are spelled with capitals. Education scarcely presented itself to them as a problem. But they had their own especial leaning towards the girls' school which was then youthfully usurping the center of local importance; they had their more or less intimate connection with it. And its obstreperous young life encroached upon their cool amused attention, or upon their generous affection, as the case might be, for many years.

For half the year, at least, gardening was a serious absorption with them, and this, long before seeds, bulbs, and sundials became the fashion. It was the custom of the region (the village wasn't compact enough, in any sense, to be called a community) to plant a patch of perennials, and then passively await the yearly flowering. That sort of thing these gardeners despised as too easy and its products as too "common." It pleased them to cultivate that which resisted cultivation. So that in June their cool still rooms were made lovely by the scent and the spectacle of exotic roses, always exquisitely arranged. They made

a point of frail late chrysanthemums and went in discriminatingly for asters and sweetpeas. While at the same time one of the sisters delighted in triumphantly applying her sound intelligence and skill to the culture of such of the more delicate products of the vegetable garden as were held to transcend the homely inspiration of the "hired man."

They loved that home of theirs, set only just above the banks of the narrow, noiseless, subtly flowing river. They loved their house and its intimacies. They loved the garden they had made; and the sunny fields where orange rudbeckias grew rankly in August, and gay red chipmunks perpetually scudded the length of low stone walls, hung with blackberries; and the arched thickets bordering the river, where catbirds built undiscoverable nests, and the cardinal-flower secretly unfolded. They loved the sudden, lavish perfume of their white lilacs in May; the broad maples and the single mulberry tree; the candidly flowering horse-chestnuts and the high, haggard "button-woods."

They loved all this; but they had no unfortunate inhibitions as to leaving it, when occasion offered; and it would be impossible to share any good thing more fully than these kin shared their travels. A journey made by any one of them became in time completely a family possession. You could actually find them grouped together before daylight, on a winter morning, the lamp on the center-table lighted, the grate fire giving out a powerful glow, the "johnny-cake" not yet issued from the kitchen oven, while some reminiscent member told or retold the ever memorable saga—or some piquant sub-division—of that long voyage by sailing vessel from New Bedford to the Azores; or of only less memorable voyages to New Orleans, to the West Indies; of excursions to California and to Colorado. Local names connoted to childhood nothing especially stimulating. But such names as Fayal and St. Michael's, New Orleans, Hayti, the Yosemite, such phrases as "when Mother went to Quebec" and "the first winter Father spent in Washington" were powerfully evocative.

Yet almost more significant than these daily preoccupations of

theirs are the matters with which they declined to be preoccupied. Scrupulously, beautifully, as their house was kept, they were civilized past the point where one makes a virtue of such perfections, or finds stimulus in discussing them. Yet it was scarcely a negligible matter that in this household nothing ever got lost or mussed or broken, that immaculacy flashed from every surface, that drawers and closets were invariably in scientific order, even that least public of closets which was the home of Cashmere shawls, of tropically fashioned baskets, of sandalwood fans, of precious linens and laces.

It was also highly characteristic that they didn't in general mention the cost of things. It is not, of course, to their credit that they weren't obliged to practise sordid economies—though these, as we all know, are sometimes the mere expression of temperament. At all events, they never did practise any. Highly practical as they were, their scale of expenditure must in the large have been conservative and (the word is theirs) prudent. Yet in detail they greatly enlivened their life by the imaginativeness and vivacity of their extravagances.

Nor did they talk much of illness, though it more or less always menaced them. It was one of the reserves that their intimacy acknowledged. Trivial ills they were frank enough to admit, and to prescribe for. Confessed indigestion or some such matter was followed by a matter-of-course visit to the "side closet," where stood the decanters of brandy and sherry, the rows of polished wineglasses, and the best tea-set, and where also the frequently replenished vials of nux vomica and aconite yielded draughts that were rarely partaken of by the sufferer alone but sociably passed about the circle. Even childhood learned greatly to fancy the cool bitter taste of this quasi-refreshment.

Summoning the doctor, if this became necessary, was a process so roundabout that half a day might pass before the mud-stained buggy would crunch into the driveway, bringing the medicine-man and news-gatherer to four or five villages. Oddly enough, unless actually bedridden, one didn't dream of isolating himself

from the family circle to receive a medical visit. Nor did the doctor appear to distinguish his patient by so much as a glance of special attention. Half an hour might be spent in lively general discussion in which the sufferer, pale but valiant, shared. Then, without interrupting himself except by requesting, in a hasty parenthesis, two-glasses-of-water-please, the doctor would suddenly cross the room and seating himself by the patient, seize his wrist, and demand to see his tongue. Here the physical examination began and ended. If the patient had ills that he felt must be spoken of, he forced them upon medical attention uninvited.

Daily talk laid rather light emphasis on the fact that adjoining this quiet home at the crossroads—crossroads so unfrequented that two vehicles almost never met there, and even one was a matter of comment—stretched a farm; but a farm in the looser, more genial sense, a pleasant, personal affair. This did not of course involve the grim, early-and-late sort of farming that limits family freedom. But it meant, for the group who had grown up here, that their eyes were habituated, from childhood, to the prolonged pageant of the haying season; to the slow, powerful movements of oxen ploughing; to the bobbing heads and lurching gait of "family" horses; to the autumn stripping of hardy apple trees; to the swelling of grapes and the tasseling of corn. It meant that almost effortlessly they had become sensitive to delicate outdoor sights and sounds, to the ways of sky and soil. They were on intimate terms with the clouds; they recognized every bird-note; and one of them, at least, could always tell the direction of the wind by a glance at the leaves of a tree, even when the air seemed scarcely to be stirring. It meant, too, of course, that garden and orchard prodigally supplied the table, and that butter-making was a regular and laborious part of the domestic routine.

Apart from these direct supplies, such a household had to sustain itself by pretty consistent forethought, particularly as it scorned heedlessness and "running short." Groceries were deliv-

ered weekly from the nearest large town. Butcher and fish dealer, in canvas-covered carts, drove every few days to the door. Now and then, there paused the tin peddler, his high wagon wreathed with shining garlands of sieves and saucepans, his system of barter piratically demanding in exchange for a single tin utensil vast bagfuls of rags and newspapers. More important staples had to be ordered from Boston, to which the affairs of this family necessitated fairly frequent trips. And it is certain that nobody ever shrank from this adventure because of the difficulties of it, even in midwinter.

Yet it involved being ready by seven o'clock, one's breakfast eaten, one's family consultations completed, one's person protected by double or even triple petticoats, by "arctics," by a sealskin cloak. Through the still starlit grayness, one hailed the stage from the window, accepting its miserably uncomfortable conveyance over frozen ruts or through squeaking, close-packed snowdrifts to the railroad station a mile and a half away. After this came an hour in the train, unventilated and heated by red-hot "air-tight" stoves, where flannels and furs were of course even dangerous encumbrances.

It was the dominating spirit of the house who often planned and prompted these expeditions. It was almost as if she vicariously undertook them. Constant always to a somewhat astonishing interest in the theater (her own memories of Charlotte Cushman were part of the common treasure of the family), she had a way of making a trip to Boston seem imperative if Booth or Salvini, Irving and Terry or even Mary Anderson were to be seen by going. And it was always with her ruthless appraisement in mind that the day's shopping was performed—the pantry supplies ordered at Pierce's, table linen cautiously chosen at Hovey's, a piece of silver or even, now and then, a new gold brooch and earrings selected at Shreve's, samples collected of the thick, lustrous, slightly ribbed fabric which was to serve as somebody's new gown. For this was at the close of the period when black silk, with passementerie of silk and jet, glove-fitting,

and worn with a small bonnet demurely flower-trimmed and tied with ribbons under the chin, was still the ceremonial costume even for young women. Which doesn't mean that their youth didn't at other times express itself more vividly, as in the pale-colored décolleté frocks, particularly suiting their stately type of good looks, which they wore, with all the zest in the world, to dances.

Perhaps it isn't necessary to set forth any more explicitly the fact that this was not, in any sense of the intolerably reiterated word, a "Puritan" household. Spiritual fineness, vigor, resiliency —character, in short—they had. They had even their secret pieties. But with those prohibitions and taboos that are the mark of evangelical communities, they had no concern. Even their Sundays were serene and cheerful, innocent of sting. Those of the family who merely "went to meeting" in the white-pillared Unitarian temple had at times a lightly teasing word or two for those who, in the more formal Episcopal manner, "went to church" in the neighboring town. But, even where childhood was concerned, there was no proselyting or constraint. Likewise these Sundays did not conform to the widespread bourgeois program of heavy dinners, naps, afternoon drives. In other words, the family felt no impulse to deaden its sensibilities and was as intellectually self-sustaining on Sundays as on other days.

They would, however, have been the last to define to themselves their own self-sufficingness, for they greatly liked the stimulus of human contacts—even though in most of their relationships it is they who were the profligate, the unreckoning givers. They had always a whole-hearted welcome for "company"; and if their hospitality was a little formal and stately, it was at the same time exquisitely solicitous. And immersion in this individual atmosphere was obviously, from the guest's point of view, an experience to cherish. The very rooms, quiet, cool, uncluttered, had a memorable charm which no mere catalogue of their contents could ever suggest. Not the charm of ancientness, for this had been rejected. Just as the family itself

was not eccentric, so there was not an artlessly quaint corner in their house. Yet individuality triumphed even over the black walnut which at this period had formidably superseded mahogany. The family assembly room may have lacked actual beauty, but it had comfort and dignity; it expressed the sane, reasonable, truly liberal temperament. And only an irreconcilable æsthete could have called the "spare chamber" an ugly room, in spite of the high-peaked bedstead, and the towering bureau with ponderous marble slabs, and clumsily superfluous black walnut tassels; it was not ugly because its appointments were so exquisitely considered, it tone so unmistakable; and because bluebirds perched perpetually upon its pink-and-lilac flowered wallpaper in such deliciously paradisal fashion. And through the windows on summer evenings you heard the frogs sing moodily from the river, and honeysuckle poured heavy fragrance all night long.

From the juvenile point of view, however, the consummately desirable spot in the house was a tiny room, almost a closet, which jutted out from that bright, orderly attic with which one associates a slightly dusty scent of drying sage and mullein. Here one looked out upon a thoroughly familiar prospect that at this height seemed dizzily enchanting; and one spent hours searching for the nameless secret pearl of books that was bound to lie hidden among discarded schoolbooks, a generation old, little volumes of rhymed sentiments, with gaily garlanded covers, magazines of the *Godey's Lady's Book* variety, with brilliant prints of ladies in ample azure skirts and flowing crimson mantles, with bright cheeks, triangular foreheads, and black curls.

If there was a more interesting retreat than this, it was that combination of office, studio, and workshop in the unused building across the road, where a much loved member of the family, always tenderly indulged because of his frail physique, practised law, discharged the not too exacting duties of a town office or so, and assembled the ingenious tools of an unrememberable number of crafts. Here one found a library and documents; blueprints and pencils, rulers and compasses, all the paraphernalia of

draughtsmanship; tripod, cameras, and the dark agencies of photograph development; paints, brushes, and canvases; tools for carving and carpentry; pistols, rifles, fishing-rods, and a musical instrument or two. And one would also come upon a book of logarithms, a sextant, and binoculars; for this lover of wood and river was moved by an even deeper love for sea and ships, for sea-lore and sailor-lore. His keen far vision could fully test itself only on vast stretches of ocean; his body adapted itself most naturally to the motions of a ship in a storm.

If I note that in spite of the thorough comradeship that existed, one didn't visit this variously fascinating room uninvited, this merely indicates how few there were, after all, of the family interests from which a child was intentionally excluded. Childhood, it is true, was not a cult with these lovers of a harmonized and patterned life into which infancy frankly didn't fit. It was quite in the old-fashioned spirit that they tolerated strange children in proportion as these "behaved" and "minded." But a favorite child, and it was their habit to interest themselves in some such, they would allow to drink as deeply from the fountains of their own life as its understanding prompted. Upon such a child they squandered uncounted kindnesses, in its thoughtless behalf they made habitual sacrifices. Unostentatiously, unsentimentally, they communicated to it as richly as they could an equipment for life.

It is permissible to suggest in this external sense their way of life, the pleasant sound of it, its bright varied aspect; but to go farther than this, to hint of its reticent depths, is not to be done. In the normal scheme, families divide and separate, branch and rebranch, plunge eager roots in alien soil and draw deep nourishment from alien air, all with the most extraordinary painlessness. It is tragically different with those rare groups, almost more than naturally harmonious, almost more than humanly self-sustaining, whose choice is to remain intact and to cultivate a sweet and terrible sense of oneness. Not that such a life is in the least melancholy, or that it is habitually pitched

in an intense key. For theirs is a oneness that doesn't express itself superficially, that may include widely diverse personalities, yet that is profound and passionate. It is a oneness that singularly tempts the derisive blast of change—this beautiful, frail oneness of a group whose griefs and whose loves are the loves and griefs of lovers.

THE NORWEGIAN MIGRATION TO AMERICA*

CALVIN COOLIDGE

(President Coolidge's address on the Norwegian migration into the United States has an interest, as he suggests, not merely historical, for Americans of other than Scandinavian descent. Though different races have migrated in successive waves to settle the United States, they have all alike been inspired by the same high purpose. Whether one speaks of the original settler, who came over from England in the *Mayflower,* or of the Scotch or the Irish or the Germans who followed them, their migration was impelled by the same desire to find a country where they might enjoy the freedom to live according to the ideals that burned within them.

Once they reached our shores, however, their quest was not ended. Many of them were forced to move ever westward by successive stages and in successive generations until they could find a congenial environment. Here they sought to preserve what was best in their own national heritage. Their Americanism, the trait they held in common, was that zealous adherence to freedom, transcending race, breeding tolerance and mutual understanding, which led them to our shores.

By their arduous undertaking these emigrants were strengthened in the admirable virtues that prompted them to make it. They learned respect for the rights of others. They became inured to hardship and were not disposed to demand the indulgence of luxuries or to look beyond themselves for the fulfilment of their needs. Such a tradition as they have left for us, the President concludes, is too valuable for us lightly to ignore.)

*An address at the Norwegian Centennial Celebration at Minnesota State Fair Grounds, June 8, 1925.

THE NORWEGIAN MIGRATION TO AMERICA

How often in the affairs of this world a small and apparently insignificant occurrence turns out to be an event of great importance, carrying in its train a mighty influence for good or evil. Such importance always flows from the character of those concerned. The generations of the earth treasure the rude hut that sheltered the infancy of Abraham Lincoln, seek out the birthplace of Shakespeare, and give to the uninviting soil of Palestine the title of the Holy Land, all because certain obscure happenings in those places produced those who left a broad mark upon the future course of humanity. The character of the participants brought future fame. It is such an event that we meet to commemorate to-day. One hundred years ago a little bark sailed from Norway to America. It was almost unnoticed at the time, save for the daring and hardihood of its navigators, but it brought with it the representatives of a stalwart race, men and women of fixed determination, enduring courage and high character, who were to draw in their retinue a long line of their fellow countrymen destined to change the face of an area broad as an empire, direct the historic course of sovereign States, and contribute to the salvation of a great nation. These mighty works have been wrought because those Norwegian immigrants were well worthy to follow in the wake of the Pilgrim and Cavalier.

This celebration is most happily identified with the present year, which is an anniversary of notable events in the history of our country. We are rounding out a century and a half from the beginning of the American Revolution. It was a half a century from the days of Concord and Lexington to the beginning of that stream of immigration from Norway which was to help guarantee

that the spirit of freedom which had been so triumphant in the Colonies should not be lost to the States.

When we consider the astonishing number of immigrants which the Scandinavian countries have contributed in proportion to their own population to making the body of American citizenship, we will appreciate the significance of this anniversary. It well deserves the consideration it is receiving here in this State which has so richly profited by a larger proportion of this north-of-Europe immigration than any other Commonwealth. Minnesota would not be Minnesota, the group of imperial northwestern States would not be what they are, but for the contribution that has been made to them by the Scandinavian countries.

Because of a profound appreciation of that contribution and of its truly national value I have found it an especial pleasure to come here and join in this commemoration. In the midst of loyalties that are all beyond possibility of question, it may be difficult to choose among the many national and racial groups that have sought out America for their home and their country. We are thankful for all of them, and yet more thankful that the experiment of their common citizenship has been so magnificently justified in its results. If one were seeking proof of a basic brotherhood among all races of men, if one were to challenge the riddle of Babel in support of aspirations for a unity capable of assuring peace to the nations, in such an inquiry I suppose no better testimony could be taken than the experience of this country. Out of the confusion of tongues, the conflict of traditions, the variations of historical setting, the vast differences in talents and tastes there has been evolved a spiritual union accompanied by a range of capacity and genius which marks this Nation for a preeminent destiny. The American people have commanded the respect of the world.

It is a good thing that anniversaries such as this are so widely commemorated. The next few years will be filled with a continuing succession of similar occasions. I wish that every one of them might be so impressively celebrated that all Americans would be

moved to study the history which each one represents. I can think of no effort that would produce so much inspiration to high and intelligent patriotism. Occasions of this nature bring to our attention whole regions of the past that would otherwise remain unexplored, tend to be forgotten even by scholars, and pass entirely from the public mind. These incentives to special examination of particular historical phases teach us better to understand our country and our countrymen. Any one who will study the institutions and people of America will come more and more to admire them.

One reason that moved me to accept the cordial invitations to come here to-day was the hope of directing some measure of national attention to the absorbingly interesting subject of the social backgrounds of our country. The making of such a country is not to be told in any mere category of dates, battles, political evolutions, and partisan controversies. Back of all these, which are too often the chief material of history, lies the human story of the unsung millions of plain people whose names are strangers to public place and fame. Their lives have been replete with quiet, unpretentious, modest but none the less heroic virtues. From these has been composed the sum of that magnificent and wondrous adventure, the making of our own America. Somewhere in the epic of struggle to subjugate a continent there will be found a philosophy of human relations that the world will greatly prize. If we could seize and fix it, if we could turn it over, examine and understand it, we would have taken a long step toward solving some of the hardest problems of mankind.

It is not so many years since visitors from other quarters of the world were wont to contemplate our concourse of races, origins, and interest, and shake their heads ominously. They feared that from such a melting pot of diverse elements we could never draw the tested, tempered metal that is the only substance for national character. Even among ourselves were many who listened with serious concern to such forebodings. They were not quite sure whether we had created a nation with the soul of a

nation. They wondered if perhaps we had merely brought together a large number of people in a large place. Had these misgivings been justified when the hour of trial came, it would have meant disaster to us and to the world. But instead of crumbling into a chaos of discordant elements, America proved its truly national unity. It demonstrated conclusively that there is a spiritual quality shared by all races and conditions of men which is their universal heritage and common nature. Powerful enough to hold this people to a high ideal in time of supreme trial, why may we not hope that the same influence will at length reach men and women wherever they are found on earth? If fraternity and cooperation are possible on the scale of this continent among people so widely diverse, why not on the scale of a world? It is not a new thought, but it is a profoundly engaging one. I firmly believe it is more than a chimera. I feel it is possible of realization. I am convinced that our national story might somewhat help to guide mankind toward such a goal. Therefore, I urge the deeply thoughtful study and teaching of our history.

No country has a history which starts with its discovery or at its boundaries. For the real beginnings of any people we must go back to the beginnings of all peoples. From the tombs of Egypt and the sands of Mesopotamia men are now unearthing the records of civilizations so ancient that by comparison we think of the recovered wonders of Carthage as almost modern. But all that we shall learn from the glyphs of Ur, the tombs of the Pharaohs, and the monuments of Crete and Carthage is part of our own history, illumination for our to-days, guideposts on the way to our to-morrows. All the past lives in the present. All the works and thoughts of those who have gone before have left their mark on what we think and do.

These Norsemen whose beginnings in the United States we here celebrate have exercised a great influence upon our modern history and western civilization which it is difficult to match among any other like number of people. In many ways their

influence upon northern and western Europe may be compared to that of the Greek states upon the civilization of the Mediterranean. They were the first deep-sea navigators. They pioneered the migrations which boldly struck across the western waters. They were at once the terrors of the Western Roman Empire and the guardians of the Eastern. The medieval Mediterranean was a happy hunting ground for them. They branded their name upon French Normandy, and from it descended upon Britain in the Norman conquest from which there was the beginning of modern English history.

One likes to linger over these tales of adventure and exploration. One of them has a special significance in connection with this celebration which entitles it to more particular reference. This, of course, is the voyage of the little sloop *Restaurationen*, which in 1825 brought the first organized party of Norwegian immigrants to this country. One reared on the New England tradition of the *Mayflower* will find all the materials for a new legend of pioneering in the voyage of the *Restaurationen*. She was a sloop of 45 tons, whereas the *Mayflower* was rated as 180 tons. The *Restaurationen* sailed from Stavanger, Norway, on July 4, 1825, with a desperately heavy cargo of iron and a party of 52 people. She came safely into the port of New York after a voyage of 14 weeks, which compares with 9 weeks required for the historic passage of the *Mayflower*.

The arrival of the *Restaurationen* created a sensation among those inured to the sea. It was claimed that she was the smallest vessel that had ever made the transatlantic crossing. The New York authorities threatened to deny her the privileges of the port on the ground that she carried too many passengers and too much cargo. She was ultimately released, apparently through the influence of the Society of Friends. Most of her passengers seemed to have been members of a Norwegian religious community intimately related to the Quakers, and it appears that one of their reasons for coming to this country was that they had not enjoyed entire liberty of religious opinion at home. Thus the parallel

between the voyages of the *Mayflower* and of the *Restaurationen*, despite that they were separated by more than 200 years, is impressive in several ways.

Almost without money or supplies, the little company of immigrants were taken in charge by the New York Quakers who raised funds to send them to Kendall, Orleans County, N. Y. There they secured lands and established the first Norwegian settlement in this country. It is a curious circumstance that although the Norwegians are among the greatest seafaring peoples, this party was composed almost entirely of farmers, so that their first interest was to get land. And ever since, the greater share of Norwegians have come in search of homes on the land. These first immigrants having practically no money, bought a tract on the shore of Lake Ontario for $5 per acre to be paid for in ten annual instalments. It is hard to realize that western New York so late as 1825 was so far on the frontier. Their land was heavily timbered, and they were compelled not only to clear it but to build their own shelter. The first house is said to have been a log cabin 12 feet square, with a garret. In this 24 of them lived for a time, the men seeking such scanty employment as was to be found in the neighborhood to support them through the winter. The only one in the party who could speak English was Capt. Lars Olson and he had remained in New York.

Despite poverty and hardships, the colony thrived, and its members were shortly writing letters back to Norway describing the opportunities of America and urging friends to come. From this beginning the stream of Norwegian immigration set in, but most of the later comers went much farther west. A few years after the settlement at Kendall another party went to La Salle County, Ill. Already the west was fascinating them and many of the original Kendall colony sold out and went on to Illinois. Thence the migration spread to other States of the middle west and northwest. Even before it was formed into a Territory, Iowa had received its first Norwegians, and from about 1835 they

spread rapidly into Wisconsin, Minnesota, the Dakotas, and other States.

It is not possible, as it is certainly not needful on this occasion, even to summarize the story of Norwegian immigration. But it should be explained that while the settlement of 1825 in Orleans County, N. Y., was the first Norwegian settlement and represented the first organized immigration, these pioneers of the *Restaurationen* were not the first Norwegians to come here. Considerable numbers had come even before the Revolutionary War and some as far back as the earliest colonial years. There were Norwegians in both Army and Navy during the Revolution and the War of 1812. But the fact remains that the great movement which established Norwegian communities all over the northwest and contributed so greatly to the building of that part of the country began with the voyage of the *Restaurationen*. It is said that Norwegians and their descendants in this country are now just about as numerous as the population of Norway itself. Norway is credited with furnishing a larger number of settlers to the United States in proportion to its population than any other European country except one.

It is frequently noted regarding immigration that the newcomers from Europe commonly sought climatic conditions here like those in which they had been raised. So the Scandinavians are found chiefly in the northern parts of this country. About 80 per cent of the population of Norway is agricultural, the remainder maritime and industrial. These proportions are closely carried out in the occupational distribution here. A great majority sought the land, but considerable numbers have always followed the sea. Some of the coincidences in connection with this migration are oddly interesting. Thus we have noted that the little sloop *Restaurationen* brought a cargo of iron; to-day Minnesota has more Norwegians and produces more iron ore than any other State. Again, Norway is a land of wonderful fresh-water lakes, and it is closely matched by Minnesota.

There is one phase in the story of immigration which seems

always to characterize it. Once the tide had set in from a particular European country, the movement thereafter has invariably been encouraged by the early comers. Not only did they urge relatives and friends in the old home to come, but they devoted their new-found prosperity to help them. On this subject there is an opportunity for some useful historical research. In the pre-Revolutionary days immigration to America seems to have been encouraged from the other side, partly from political and partly from business motives. The colonizing countries of Europe competed to control the best parts of the New World by occupying it with their colonies. Immigration was encouraged both by the Governments and by companies of merchant adventurers. At that stage of the movement, of course, the colonies possessed no wealth to help their friends to come. But after the Revolution the situation greatly changed. New political conditions made this country more attractive than ever before, and developing wealth and opportunity emphasized its invitation. So we find the people of our Republic deliberately and consciously encouraging the movement in this direction. There is opportunity for a much more detailed examination of these factors in the European migration than has yet been undertaken. It would be a profoundly interesting contribution to the story of this greatest of all migrations that humanity has ever accomplished if we could know more of the precise motives which have animated it.

The contribution of this country to financing immigration of the last century and a third has certainly run into hundreds of millions of dollars, perhaps into billions. It has had a profound social influence, both here and in Europe. Its economic consequences could hardly be overestimated. A detailed inquiry into these facts should include a close consideration of all the great migrations which have marked the distribution of men throughout the world. Man seems to have been from his beginnings the most migratory of animals. His earlier movements appear to have had their chief motive in adventure and the desire to find the regions where existence was most comfortable. There could

hardly have been a very serious pressure of population, for it is only in recent historic times that this factor has existed. Some very early migrations were doubtless due to climatic or other physical conditions. Later on political, social, religious, and economic reasons caused the movements. Some went forth to make conquests, others were driven out by conquest. The children of Israel migrated into Egypt to escape from famine. They left Egypt to escape from bondage and to recover their religious liberty. The old Romans and Phœnicians were great colonizers, the Romans from imperialistic motives and the Phœnicians from desire to extend their trade. The European migration to the American Continent represented in its various phases all the causes that have operated through the ages to bring about such shifts of population. In the beginning there was chiefly the motive of exploration and adventure. Later came the desire to be freed from onerous clerical or political restrictions. Then, with the realization of America's enormous resources, there was the wish to share in its developing riches. Only in the later stages of the movement did the people of this country reach their hand of welcome to the friends across the Atlantic, both urging and assisting them to come.

Though I make no pretense to deep studies in the subject, yet I have been impressed that in this last regard the shift of Old-World peoples to this side of the Atlantic was perhaps unique. From the time when their fast-developing institutions of popular government, religious freedom, and intellectual liberality had begun to take definite and attractive forms, the people of the Colonies took a new interest in inducing their European relatives to follow them thither. They engaged in an inverted crusade, a conquest without invasion and without force. The new country offered not only material opportunities, but possibilities of a spiritual and intellectual emancipation which they ardently wished their friends on the other side to share. Citizenship in the New World meant something that it had not meant in the Old. It was seen that the New World offered something new. There was

increasing realization that many burdensome traditions and institutions had somehow been shed. Here at last the individual was lord of himself, master of his own destiny, keeper of his own sovereignty. Here he was free.

With the eighteenth century's epoch of intellectual liberalism there came yet more sharp realization that the new country was not bound to ancient manners and prejudices, and that therefore it offered to the common man a better chance. Here he might realize that ideal of equality which by this time was so generally finding a lodgment in European minds. This spiritual evolution moved rather slowly during the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century. The Seven Years' War, or as we commonly call it, the French and Indian War, was for the Colonies a period of rapid awakening and realization. They began to find themselves, to formulate more definite aspirations for their future. But it does not appear that this new conception of American destiny began in any important way to be shared in Europe until the Revolution, independence and the establishment of the Federal Government forced it upon the old countries. Then a new idea began to fix itself in the European mind. The new country was seen as an essentially vitally, basically different conception of human relationship. It appeared not merely as a new country, but as a different kind of country. It was considered not only different from Europe, but different from any earlier social creations. The European peoples had been greatly stirred by the intellectual awakening of the eighteenth century, and the liberals among them had been deeply disappointed at the seeming meager results which accrued from it. We may well wonder what would have been the fate of Europe after 1815, if the liberalism of both England and the Continent had settled down to disappointment and cynicism. We cannot doubt that during this period, say from 1815 to 1848, the beacon which they saw had been lighted over the western Atlantic was a lamp to the feet and a hope to the hearts of liberals throughout Europe.

Within this period immigration from the north and west of

Europe was not only rapidly building this country into numbers, wealth, and authority in the world, but it was having a tremendous reflex upon Europe itself. But for American example and influence the democratic movements of 1832 and 1848 in Europe might have been long postponed. The broadly democratic evolution which swayed Europe so greatly in the latter half of the nineteenth century might have failed entirely.

In the period we have been discussing nearly all the immigration to the United States was from northern and western Europe. Through its reactions upon Europe it gave constant encouragement there to liberal thought and action. In this country, by gradually giving the North a great preponderance in numbers, it hastened the downfall of slavery and helped rid our institutions of that great and threatening anomaly.

These Northmen, one of whose anniversaries we are celebrating to-day, have from their first appearance on the margin of history been the children of freedom. Native to a rigorous climate and a none too productive soil, they have learned the necessity for hard work and careful management. They were moved by that aspiration for a free holding in the land which has always marked peoples in whom the democratic ideal was pressing for recognition. Eager for both political and economic independence, they realized the necessity for popular education, and so have always been among the most devoted supporters of public schools. Thousands of them volunteered in the service of the country during the Civil and Spanish Wars, and tens of thousands in the World War. The institutions and the manners of democracy came naturally to them. Their glory is all about you, their living and their mighty dead. They have given great soldiers, statesmen, scientists, educators and men of business to the upbuilding of their adopted country. They have been rapidly amalgamated into the body of citizenship, contributing to it many of its best and most characteristic elements. To their adaptability the Nation owes much for its success in the enormous process of assimilation

and spiritual unification that has made our Nation what it is and our people what they are.

Although this movement of people originated in Norway, in its essence and its meaning it is peculiarly American. It has nothing about it of class or caste. It has no tinge of aristocracy. It was not produced through the leadership of some great figure. It is represented almost entirely by that stalwart strain who make the final decisions in this world, which we designate the common people. It has about it the strength of the home and the fireside; the family ties of the father and the mother, the children and the kindred. It has all been carried on very close to the soil, it has all been extremely human. When I consider the marvelous results it has accomplished I cannot but believe that it was inspired by a Higher Power. Here is something vital, firm, and abiding, which I can only describe as a great reality.

An enormous power has come to you, but you are charged with equally enormous responsibilities. Those responsibilities you have never failed to meet, that power you have never failed to sanctify. Therein lies the sole title to all the glory you have achieved in the past and therein will lie the sole title to all the glory that you will achieve in the future. Believing that there resides in an enlightened people an all-compelling force for righteousness, I have every faith that through the vigorous performance of your duties you will add new luster to your glory in the days to come.

Our America with all that it represents of hope in the world is now and will be what you make it. Its institutions of religious liberty, of educational and economic opportunity, of constitutional rights, of the integrity of the law, are the most precious possessions of the human race. These do not emanate from the Government. Their abiding place is with the people. They come from the consecration of the father, the love of the mother, and the devotion of the children. They are the product of that honest, earnest, and tireless effort that goes into the rearing of the family altar and the making of the home of our country. They can have no stronger supporters, no more loyal defenders, than

that great body of our citizenship which you represent. When I look upon you and realize what you are and what you have done, I know that in your hands our country is secure. You have laid up your treasure in what America represents, and there will your heart be also. You have given your pledge to the Land of the Free. The pledge of the Norwegian people has never yet gone unredeemed.

THE WEST AND AMERICAN IDEALS*

FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER

(Professor Turner has written an essay that will stimulate a whole series of reflections. He gives us a definition of the two-fold function of a university. He remarks that our self-questioning, what some writers have called our "inferiority complex" as a people, is of recent growth, that historically we have acted with an unpremeditated but well-intentioned directness. But he is not primarily concerned with such questions. He reviews the history of the settlement of the west, that westward movement of the old frontier line which separated the settled country from the wilderness, of which this native of Wisconsin, long professor of history at its university, now professor emeritus at Harvard, has made himself conspicuously the historian.

This history of western settlement Professor Turner here recounts to show not simply that Americans have always been eager to explore the undiscovered but that we have done so in a spirit of sturdy individualism. Conditions now have changed. The frontier line disappeared about 1890. Where once were backwoodsmen are now slums crowded with laborers of foreign speech, unassimilated to our ideals, oppressed by the rapid growth of an industrial system. May not our individualism be crushed in the attempt to adjust our citizens to this new condition, this new and inevitable stability of population after so many decades of free movement westward? Professor Turner believes we have reached a crisis in our natural development; in meeting it he bids us hold firm to what President Coolidge has called our ideal of freedom, but which he would define somewhat more closely as

*From *The Frontier in American History*. Henry Holt & Co., 1921.

our old "ideal of democracy, the ideal of a free self-directing people, responsive to leadership in the forming of programs and their execution, but insistent that the precedure should be that of free choice, not of compulsion.")

THE WEST AND AMERICAN IDEALS

True to American traditions that each succeeding generation ought to find in the Republic a better home, once in every year the colleges and universities summon the nation to lift its eyes from the routine of work, in order to take stock of the country's purposes and achievements, to examine its past and consider its future.

This attitude of self-examination is hardly characteristic of the people as a whole. Particularly it is not characteristic of the historic American. He has been an opportunist rather than a dealer in general ideas. Destiny set him in a current which bore him swiftly along through such a wealth of opportunity that reflection and well-considered planning seemed wasted time. He knew not where he was going, but he was on his way, cheerful, optimistic, busy and buoyant.

To-day we are reaching a changed condition, less apparent perhaps, in the newer regions than in the old, but sufficiently obvious to extend the commencement frame of mind from the college to the country as a whole. The swift and inevitable current of the upper reaches of the nation's history has borne it to the broader expanse and slower stretches which mark the nearness of the level sea. The vessel, no longer carried along by the rushing waters, finds it necessary to determine its own directions on this new ocean of its future, to give conscious consideration to its motive power and to its steering gear.

It matters not so much that those who address these college men and women upon life, give conflicting answers to the questions of whence and whither: the pause for remembrance, for reflection and for aspiration is wholesome in itself.

Although the American people are becoming more self-con-

scious, more responsive to the appeal to act by deliberate choices, we should be over-sanguine if we believed that even in this new day these commencement surveys were taken to heart by the general public, or that they were directly and immediately influential upon national thought and action.

But even while we check our enthusiasm by this realization of the common thought, we must take heart. The University's peculiar privilege and distinction lie in the fact that it is not the passive instrument of the State to voice its current ideas. Its problem is not that of expressing tendencies. Its mission is to create tendencies and to direct them. Its problem is that of leadership and of ideals. It is called, of course, to justify the support which the public gives it, by working in close and sympathetic touch with those it serves. More than that, it would lose important element of strength if it failed to recognize the fact that improvement and creative movement often come from the masses themselves, instinctively moving toward a better order. The University's graduates must be fitted to take their places naturally and effectually in the common life of the time.

But the University is called especially to justify its existence by giving to its sons and daughters something which they could not well have gotten through the ordinary experiences of the life outside its walls. It is called to serve the time by independent research and by original thought. If it were a mere recording instrument of conventional opinion and average information, it is hard to see why the University should exist at all. To clasp hands with the common life in order that it may lift that life, to be a radiant center enkindling the society in which it has its being, these are primary duties of the University. Fortunate the State which gives free play to this spirit of inquiry. Let it "grubstake" its intellectual prospectors and send them forth where "the trails run out and stop." A famous scientist holds that the universal ether bears vital germs which impinging upon a dead world would bring life to it. So, at least it is, in the world of thought, where energized ideals put in the air and carried here

and there by the waves and currents of the intellectual atmosphere, fertilize vast inert areas.

The University, therefore, has a double duty. On the one hand it must aid in the improvement of the general economic and social environment. It must help on in the work of scientific discovery and of making such conditions of existence, economic, political and social, as will produce more fertile and responsive soil for a higher and better life. It must stimulate a wider demand on the part of the public for right leadership. It must extend its operations more widely among the people and sink deeper shafts through social strata to find new supplies of intellectual gold in popular levels yet untouched. And on the other hand, it must find and fit men and women for leadership. It must both awaken new demands and it must satisfy those demands by trained leaders with new motives, with new incentives to ambition, with higher and broader conception of what constitute the prize in life, of what constitutes success. The University has to deal with both the soil and sifted seed in the agriculture of the human spirit.

Its efficiency is not the efficiency which the business engineer is fitted to appraise. If it is a training ship, it is a training ship bound on a voyage of discovery, seeking new horizons. The economy of the University's consumption can only be rightly measured by the later times which shall possess those new realms of the spirit which its voyage shall reveal. If the ships of Columbus had engaged in a profitable coastwise traffic between Palos and Cadiz they might have saved sail cloth, but their keels would never have grated on the shores of a New World.

The appeal of the undiscovered is strong in America. For three centuries the fundamental process in its history was the westward movement, the discovery and occupation of the vast free spaces of the continent. We are the first generation of Americans who can look back upon that era as a historic movement now coming to its end. Other generations have been so much a part of it that they could hardly comprehend its signifi-

cance. To them it seemed inevitable. The free land and the natural resources seemed practically inexhaustible. Nor were they aware of the fact that their most fundamental traits, their institutions, even their ideals were shaped by this interaction between the wilderness and themselves.

American democracy was born of no theorist's dream; it was not carried in the *Sarah Constant* to Virginia, nor in the *Mayflower* to Plymouth. It came out of the American forest, and it gained new strength each time it touched a new frontier. Not the constitution, but free land and an abundance of natural resources open to a fit people, made the democratic type of society in America for three centuries while it occupied its empire.

To-day we are looking with a shock upon a changed world. The national problem is no longer how to cut and burn away the vast screen of the dense and daunting forest; it is how to save and wisely use the remaining timber. It is no longer how to get the great spaces of fertile prairie land in humid zones out of the hands of the government into the hands of the pioneer; these lands have already passed into private possession. No longer is it a question of how to avoid or cross the Great Plains and the arid desert. It is a question of how to conquer those rejected lands by new method of farming and by cultivating new crops from seed collected by the government and by scientists from the cold, dry steppes of Siberia, the burning sands of Egypt, and the remote interior of China. It is a problem of how to bring the precious rills of water on to the alkali and sage brush. Population is increasing faster than the food supply.

New farm lands no longer increase decade after decade in areas equal to those of European states. While the ratio of increase of improved land declines, the value of farm lands rises and the price of food leaps upward, reversing the old ratio between the two. The cry of scientific farming and the conservation of natural resources replaces the cry of rapid conquest of the wilderness. We have so far won our national home, wrested from it its first rich treasures, and drawn to it the unfortunate of other

lands, that we are already obliged to compare ourselves with settled states of the Old World. In place of our attitude of contemptuous indifference to the legislation of such countries as Germany and England, even Western States like Wisconsin send commissions to study their systems of taxation, workingmen's insurance, old age pensions and a great variety of other remedies for social ills.

If we look about the periphery of the nation, everywhere we see the indications that our world is changing. On the streets of Northeastern cities like New York and Boston, the faces which we meet are to a surprising extent those of Southeastern Europe. Puritan New England, which turned its capital into factories and mills and drew to its shores an army of cheap labor, governed these people for a time by a ruling class like an upper stratum between which and the lower strata there was no assimilation. There was no such evolution into an assimilated commonwealth as is seen in Middle Western agricultural States, where immigrant and old native stock came in together and built up a homogeneous society on the principle of give and take. But now the Northeastern coast finds its destiny, politically and economically, passing away from the descendants of the Puritans. It is the little Jewish boy, the Greek or the Sicilian, who takes the traveler through historic streets, now the home of these newer people, to the Old North Church or to Paul Revere's house, or to Tea Wharf, and tells you in his strange patois the story of revolution against oppression.

Along the Southern Atlantic and the Gulf coast, in spite of the preservative influence of the negro, whose presence has always called out resistance to change on the part of the whites, the forces of social and industrial transformation are at work. The old tidewater aristocracy has surrendered to the up-country democrats. Along the line of the Alleghanies like an advancing column, the forces of Northern capital, textile and steel mills, year after year extend their invasion into the lower South. New Orleans, once the mistress of the commerce of the Mississippi

Valley, is awakening to new dreams of world commerce. On the southern border, similar invasions of American capital have been entering Mexico. At the same time, the opening of the Panama Canal has completed the dream of the ages of the Straits of Anian between Atlantic and Pacific. Four hundred years ago, Balboa raised the flag of Spain at the edge of the Sea of the West and we are now preparing to celebrate both that anniversary, and the piercing of the continent. New relations have been created between Spanish America and the United States and the world is watching the mediation of Argentina, Brazil and Chile between the contending forces of Mexico and the Union. Once more alien national interests lie threatening at our borders, but we no longer appeal to the Monroe Doctrine and send our armies of frontiersmen to settle our concerns off-hand. We take council with European nations and with the sisterhood of South America, and propose a remedy of social reorganization in place of imperious will and force. Whether the effort will succeed or not, it is a significant indication that an old order is passing away, when such a solution is undertaken by a President of Scotch Presbyterian stock, born in the State of Virginia.

If we turn to the Northern border, where we are about to celebrate a century of peace with England, we see in progress, like a belated procession of our own history the spread of pioneers, the opening of new wildernesses, the building of new cities, the growth of a new and mighty nation. That old American advance of the wheat farmer from the Connecticut to the Mohawk, and the Genesee, from the Great Valley of Pennsylvania to the Ohio Valley and the prairies of the Middle West, is now by its own momentum and under the stimulus of Canadian homesteads and the high price of wheat, carried across the national border to the once lone plains where the Hudson Bay dog trains crossed the desolate snows of the wild North Land. In the Pacific Northwest the era of construction has not ended, but it is so rapidly in progress that we can already see the closing of the age of the pioneer. Already Alaska beckons on the north, and pointing to

her wealth of natural resources asks the nation on what new terms the new age will deal with her. Across the Pacific looms Asia, no longer a remote vision and a symbol of the unchanging, but borne as by mirage close to our shores and raising grave questions of the common destiny of the people of the ocean. The dreams of Benton and of Seward of a regenerated Orient, when the long march of westward civilization should complete its circle, seem almost to be in process of realization. The age of the Pacific Ocean begins, mysterious and unfathomable in its meaning for our own future.

Turning to view the interior, we see the same picture of change. When the Superintendent of the Census in 1890 declared the frontier line no longer traceable, the beginning of the rush into Oklahoma had just occurred. Here where the broken fragments of Indian nations from the East had been gathered and where the wilder tribes of the Southwest were being settled, came the rush of the land-hungry pioneer. Almost at a blow the old Indian territory passed away, populous cities came into being and it was not long before gushing oil wells made a new era of sudden wealth. The farm lands of the Middle West taken as free homesteads or bought for a mere pittance, have risen so in value that the original owners have in an increasing degree either sold them in order to reinvest in the newer cheap lands of the West, or have moved into the town and have left the tillage to tenant farmers. The growth of absentee ownership of the soil is producing a serious problem in the former centers of the Granger and the Populist. Along the Old Northwest the Great Lakes are becoming a new Mediterranean Sea joining the realms of wheat and iron ore, at one end with the coal and furnaces of the forks of the Ohio, where the most intense and wide-reaching center of industrial energy exists. City life like that of the East, manufactures and accumulated capital, seem to be reproducing in the center of the Republic the tendencies already so plain on the Atlantic Coast.

Across the Great Plains where buffalo and Indian held sway

successive industrial waves are passing. The old free range gave place to the ranch, the ranch to the homestead and now in places in the arid lands the homestead is replaced by the ten or twenty acre irrigated fruit farm. The age of cheap land, cheap corn and wheat, and cheap cattle has gone forever. The federal government has undertaken vast paternal enterprises of reclamation of the desert.

In the Rocky Mountains where at the time of Civil War, the first important rushes to gold and silver mines carried the frontier backward on a march toward the east, the most amazing transformations have occurred. Here, where prospectors made new trails, and lived the wild free life of mountain men, here where the human spirit seemed likely to attain the largest measure of individual freedom, and where fortune beckoned to the common man, have come revolutions wrought by the demand for organized industry and capital. In the regions where the popular tribunal and the free competitive life flourished, we have seen law and order break down in the unmitigated collision of great aggregations of capital, with each other and with organized socialistic labor. The Cripple Creek strikes, the contests at Butte, the Goldfield mobs, the recent Colorado fighting, all tell a similar story,—the solid impact of contending forces in regions where civic power and loyalty to the State have never fully developed. Like the Grand Cañon, where in dazzling light the huge geologic history is written so large that none may fail to read it, so in the Rocky Mountains the dangers of modern American industrial tendencies have been exposed.

As we crossed the Cascades on our way to Seattle, one of the passengers was moved to explain his feeling on the excellence of Puget Sound in contrast with the remaining visible Universe. He did it well in spite of irreverent interruptions from those fellow travelers who were unconverted children of the East, and at last he broke forth in passionate challenge, "Why should I not love Seattle! It took me from the slums of the Atlantic Coast, a poor Swedish boy with hardly fifteen dollars in my pocket. It

gave me a home by the beautiful sea; it spread before my eyes a vision of snow-capped peaks and smiling fields; it brought abundance and a new life to me and my children and I love it, I love it! If I were a multimillionaire I would charter freight cars and carry away from the crowded tenements and noisome alleys of the eastern cities and the Old World the toiling masses, and let them loose in our vast forests and ore-laden mountains to learn what life really is!" And my heart was stirred by his words and by the whirling spaces of woods and peaks through which we passed.

But as I looked and listened to this passionate outcry, I remembered the words of Talleyrand, the exiled Bishop of Autun, in Washington's administration. Looking down from an eminence not far from Philadelphia upon a wilderness which is now in the heart of that huge industrial society where population presses on the means of life, even the cold-blooded and cynical Talleyrand, gazing on those unpeopled hills and forests, kindled with the vision of coming clearings, the smiling farms and grazing herds that were to be, the populous towns that should be built, the newer and finer social organization that should there arise. And then I remembered the hall in Harvard's museum of social ethics through which I pass to my lecture room when I speak on the history of the Westward movement. That hall is covered with an exhibit of the work in Pittsburgh steel mills, and of the congested tenements. Its charts and diagrams tell of the long hours of work, the death rate, the relation of typhoid to the slums, the gathering of the poor of all Southeastern Europe to make a civilization at that center of American industrial energy and vast capital that is a social tragedy. As I enter my lecture room through that hall, I speak of the young Washington leading his Virginia frontiersmen to the magnificent forest at the forks of the Ohio. Where Braddock and his men, "carving a cross on the wilderness rim," were struck by the painted savages in the primeval woods, huge furnaces belch forth perpetual fires and Huns and Bulgars, Poles and Sicilians struggle for a chance

to earn their daily bread, and live a brutal and degraded life. Irresistibly there rushed across my mind the memorable words of Huxley:

> "Even the best of modern civilization appears to me to exhibit a condition of mankind which neither embodies any worthy ideal nor even possesses the merit of stability. I do not hesitate to express the opinion that, if there is no hope of a large improvement of the condition of the greater part of the human family; if it is true that the increase of knowledge, the winning of a greater dominion over Nature, which is its consequence, and the wealth which follows upon that dominion, are to make no difference in the extent and the intensity of Want, with its concomitant physical and moral degradation, among the masses of the people, I should hail the advent of some kindly comet, which would sweep the whole affair away, as a desirable consummation."

But if there is disillusion and shock and apprehension as we come to realize these changes, to strong men and women there is challenge and inspiration in them too. In place of old frontiers of wilderness, there are new frontiers of unwon fields of science, fruitful for the needs of the race; there are frontiers of better social domains yet unexplored. Let us hold to our attitude of faith and courage, and creative zeal. Let us dream as our fathers dreamt and let us make our dreams come true.

> "Daughters of Time, the hypocritic days,
> Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
> And marching single in an endless file,
> Bear diadems and fagots in their hands.
> To each they offer gifts after his will
> Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
> I, in my pleachéd garden watched the pomp,
> Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
> Took a few herbs and apples and the day
> Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
> Under her solemn fillet, saw the scorn!"

What were America's "morning wishes"? From the beginning of that long westward march of the American people America has never been the home of mere contented materialism. It has continuously sought new ways and dreamed of a perfected social type.

In the fifteenth century when men dealt with the New World which Columbus found, the ideal of discovery was dominant. Here was placed within the reach of men whose ideas had been bounded by the Atlantic, new realms to be explored. America became the land of European dreams, its Fortunate Islands were made real, where, in the imagination of old Europe, peace and happiness, as well as riches and eternal youth, were to be found. To Sir Edwin Sandys and his friends of the London Company, Virginia offered an opportunity to erect the Republic for which they had longed in vain in England. To the Puritans, New England was the new land of freedom, wherein they might establish the institutions of God, according to their own faith. As the vision died away in Virginia toward the close of the seventeenth century, it was taken up anew by the fiery Bacon with his revolution to establish a real democracy in place of the rule of the planter aristocracy, that formed along the coast. Hardly had he been overthrown when in the eighteenth century, the democratic ideal was rejuvenated by the strong frontiersmen, who pressed beyond the New England Coast into the Berkshires and up the valleys of the Green Mountains of Vermont, and by the Scotch-Irish and German pioneers who followed the Great Valley from Pennsylvania into the Upland South. In both the Yankee frontiersmen and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians of the South, the Calvinistic conception of the importance of the individual, bound by free covenant to his fellow men and to God, was a compelling influence, and all their wilderness experience combined to emphasize the ideals of opening new ways, of giving freer play to the individual, and of constructing democratic society.

When the backwoodsmen crossed the Alleghanies they put

between themselves and the Atlantic Coast a barrier which seemed to separate them from a region already too much like the Europe they had left, and as they followed the courses of the rivers that flowed to the Mississippi, they called themselves "Men of the Western Waters," and their new home in the Mississippi Valley was the "Western World." Here, by the thirties, Jacksonian democracy flourished, strong in the faith of the intrinsic excellence of the common man, in his right to make his own place in the world, and in his capacity to share in government. But while Jacksonian democracy demanded these rights, it was also loyal to leadership as the very name implies. It was ready to follow to the uttermost the man in whom it placed its trust, whether the hero were frontier fighter or president, and it even rebuked and limited its own legislative representatives and recalled its senators when they ran counter to their chosen executive. Jacksonian democracy was essentially rural. It was based on the good fellowship and genuine social feeling of the frontier, in which classes and inequalities of fortune played little part. But it did not demand equality of condition, for there was abundance of natural resources and the belief that the self-made man had a right to his success in the free competition which western life afforded, was as prominent in their thought as was the love of democracy. On the other hand, they viewed governmental restraints with suspicion as a limitation on their right to work out their own individuality.

For the banking institutions and capitalists of the East they had an instinctive antipathy. Already they feared that the "money power" as Jackson called it, was planning to make hewers of wood and drawers of water of the common people.

In this view they found allies among the labor leaders of the East, who in the same period began their fight for better conditions of the wage earner. These Locofocos were the first Americans to demand fundamental social changes for the benefit of the workers in the cities. Like the Western pioneers, they protested against monopolies and special privilege. But they

also had a constructive policy, whereby society was to be kept democratic by free gifts of the public land, so that surplus labor might not bid against itself, but might find an outlet in the West. Thus to both the labor theorist and the practical pioneer, the existence of what seemed inexhaustible cheap land and unpossessed resources was the condition of democracy. In these years of the thirties and forties, Western democracy took on its distinctive form. Travelers like De Tocqueville and Harriet Martineau, came to study and to report it enthusiastically to Europe.

Side by side with this westward marching army of individualistic liberty-loving democratic backwoodsmen, went a more northern stream of pioneers, who cherished similar ideas, but added to them the desire to create new industrial centers, to build up factories, to build railroads, and to develop the country by founding cities and extending prosperity. They were ready to call upon legislatures to aid in this, by subscriptions to stock, grants of franchises, promotion of banking and internal improvements. These were the Whig followers of that other Western leader, Henry Clay, and their early strength lay in the Ohio Valley, and particularly among the well-to-do. In the South their strength was found among the aristocracy of the Cotton Kingdom.

Both of these Western groups, Whigs and Democrats alike, had one common ideal: the desire to leave their children a better heritage than they themselves had received, and both were fired with devotion to the ideal of creating in this New World a home more worthy of mankind. Both were ready to break with the past, to boldly strike out new lines of social endeavor, and both believed in American expansion.

Before these tendencies had worked themselves out, three new forces entered. In the sudden extension of our boundaries to the Pacific Coast, which took place in the forties, the nation won so vast a domain that its resources seemed illimitable and its society seemed able to throw off all its maladies by the

very presence of these vast new spaces. At the same period the great activity of railroad building to the Mississippi Valley occurred, making these lands available and diverting attention to the task of economic construction. The third influence was the slavery question which, becoming acute, shaped the American ideals and public discussion for nearly a generation. Viewed from one angle, this struggle involved the great question of national unity. From another it involved the question of the relations of labor and capital, democracy and aristocracy. It was not without significance that Abraham Lincoln became the very type of American pioneer democracy, the first adequate and elemental demonstration to the world that that democracy could produce a man who belonged to the ages.

After the war, new national energies were set loose, and new construction and development engaged the attention of the Westerners as they occupied prairies and Great Plains and mountains. Democracy and capitalistic development did not seem antagonistic.

With the passing of the frontier, Western social and political ideals took new form. Capital began to consolidate in even greater masses, and increasingly attempted to reduce to system and control the processes of industrial development. Labor with equal step organized its forces to destroy the old competitive system. It is not strange that the Western pioneers took alarm for their ideals of democracy as the outcome of the free struggle for the national resources became apparent. They espoused the cause of governmental activity.

It was a new gospel, for the Western radical became convinced that he must sacrifice his ideal of individualism and free competition in order to maintain his ideal of democracy. Under this conviction the Populist revised the pioneer conception of government. He saw in government no longer something outside of him, but the people themselves shaping their own affairs. He demanded therefore an extension of the powers of governments in the interest of his historic ideal of democratic

society. He demanded not only free silver, but the ownership of the agencies of communication and transportation, the income tax, the postal savings bank, the provision of means of credit for agriculture, the construction of more effective devices to express the will of the people, primary nominations, direct elections, initiative, referendum and recall. In a word, capital, labor, and the Western pioneer, all deserted the ideal of competitive individualism in order to organize their interests in more effective combinations. The disappearance of the frontier, the closing of the era which was marked by the influence of the West as a form of society, brings with it new problems of social adjustment, new demands for considering our past ideals and our present needs.

Let us recall the conditions of the foreign relations along our borders, the dangers that wait us if we fail to unite in the solution of our domestic problems. Let us recall those internal evidences of the destruction of our old social order. If we take to heart this warning, we shall do well also to recount our historic ideals, to take stock of those purposes, and fundamental assumptions that have gone to make the American spirit and the meaning of America in world history.

First of all, there was the ideal of democracy, the courageous determination to break new paths, indifference to the dogma that because an institution or a condition exists, it must remain. All American experience has gone to the making of the spirit of innovation; it is in the blood and will not be repressed.

Then, there was the ideal of democracy, the ideal of a free self-directing people, responsive to leadership in the forming of programs and their execution, but insistent that the procedure should be that of free choice, not of compulsion.

But there was also the ideal of individualism. This democratic society was not a disciplined army, where all must keep step and where the collective interests destroyed individual will and work. Rather it was a mobile mass of fairly circulating atoms, each seeking its own place and finding play for its own

powers and for its own original initiative. We cannot lay too much stress upon this point, for it was at the very heart of the whole American movement. The world was to be made a better world by the example of a democracy in which there was freedom of the individual, in which there was the vitality and mobility productive of originality and variety.

Bearing in mind the far-reaching influence of the disappearance of unlimited resources open to all men for the taking, and considering the recoil of the common man when he saw the outcome of the competitive struggle for these resources as the supply came to its end over most of the nation, we can understand the reaction against individualism and in favor of drastic assertion of the powers of government. Legislation is taking the place of the free lands as the means of preserving the ideal of democracy. But at the same time it is endangering the other pioneer ideal of creative and competitive individualism. Both were essential and constituted what was best in America's contribution to history and to progress. Both must be preserved if the nation would be true to its past, and would fulfil its highest destiny. It would be a grave misfortune if these people so rich in experience, in self-confidence and aspiration, in creative genius, should turn to some Old World discipline of socialism or plutocracy, or despotic rule, whether by class or by dictator. Nor shall we be driven to these alternatives. Our ancient hopes, our courageous faith, our underlying good humor and love of fair play will triumph in the end. There will be give and take in all directions. There will be disinterested leadership, under loyalty to the best American ideals. Nowhere is this leadership more likely to arise than among the men trained in the Universities, aware of the promise of the past and the possibilities of the future. The times call for new ambitions and new motives.

In a most suggestive essay on the Problems of Modern Democracy, Mr. Godkin has said:

"M. A. de Tocqueville and all his followers take it for granted that the great incentive to excellence, in all countries in which excellence is found, is the patronage and encouragement of an aristocracy; that democracy is generally content with mediocrity. But where is the proof of this? The incentive to exertion which is widest, most constant, and most powerful in its operations in all civilized countries, is the desire of distinction; and this may be composed either of love of fame or love of wealth or of both. In literary and artistic and scientific pursuits, sometimes the strongest influence is exerted by a love of the subject. But it may safely be said that no man has ever labored in any of the higher colleges to whom the applause and appreciation of his fellows was not one of the sweetest rewards of his exertions.

"What is there we would ask, in the nature of democratic institutions, that should render this great spring of action powerless, that should deprive glory of all radiance, and put ambition to sleep? Is it not notorious, on the contrary, that one of the most marked peculiarities of democratic society, or of a society drifting toward democracy, is the fire of competition which rages in it, the fevered anxiety which possesses all its members to rise above the dead level to which the law is ever seeking to confine them, and by some brilliant stroke become something higher and more remarkable than their fellows? The secret of that great restlessness which is one of the most disagreeable accompaniments of life in democratic countries, is in fact due to the eagerness of everybody to grasp the prizes of which in aristocratic countries, only the few have much chance. And in no other society is success more worshiped, is distinction of any kind more widely flattered and caressed.

"In democratic societies, in fact, excellence is the first title to distinction; in aristocratic ones there are two or three others which are far stronger and which must be stronger or aristocracy could not exist. The moment you acknowledge that the highest social position ought to be the reward of the man who has the most talent, you make aristocratic institutions impossible."

All that was buoyant and creative in American life would be lost if we gave up the respect for distinct personality, and

variety in genius, and came to the dead level of common standards. To be "socialized into an average" and placed "under the tutelage of the mass of us," as a recent writer has put it, would be an irreparable loss. Nor is it necessary in a democracy, as these words of Godkin well disclose. What is needed is the multiplication of motives for ambition and the opening of new lines of achievement for the strongest. As we turn from the task of the first rough conquest of the continent there lies before us a whole wealth of unexploited resources in the realm of the spirit. Arts and letters, science and better social creation, loyalty and political service to the commonweal,—these and a thousand other directions of activity are open to the men, who formerly under the incentive of attaining distinction by amassing extraordinary wealth, saw success only in material display. Newer and finer careers will open to the ambitious when once public opinion shall award the laurels to those who rise above their fellows in these new fields of labor. It has not been the gold, but the getting of the gold, that has caught the imaginations of our captains of industry. Their real enjoyment lay not in the luxuries which wealth brought, but in the work of construction and in the place which society awarded them. A new era will come if schools and universities can only widen the intellectual horizon of the people, help to lay the foundations of a better industrial life, show them new goals for endeavor, inspire them with more varied and higher ideals.

The Western spirit must be invoked for new and nobler achievements. Of that matured Western spirit, Tennyson's Ulysses is a symbol.

> " . . . I am become a name
> For always roaming with an hungry heart,
> Much have I seen and known . . .
> I am a part of all that I have met;
> Yet all experience is an arch, where thro'
> Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
> Forever and forever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an end.
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
. . . . . .
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a shining star
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
. . . Come my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the Western stars until I die
. . . . . .
To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield."

THE ONCE OPEN ROAD *

CHARLES MERZ

(Both President Coolidge and Professor Turner in their essays have spoken of American history as the story of a migrating people. Whatever their original race, whatever the date of their coming to our shores, Americans have until recently taken part in a rapid movement of population to the west. At length, so Professor Turner states, about 1890, the frontier line disappeared from our maps, and America was "settled." It is at this point that Mr. Merz interrupts to suggest that according to one possible definition of the word, America is hardly settled yet. For, not many years after the frontier vanished, the automobile appeared. By this time, says Mr. Merz, locomotion had become habitual to the American nation. The tradition of migration has made us a roving people, though we no longer ride about in search of a new place to settle, but only because of a congenital and perhaps not altogether healthy restlessness at the idea of remaining "put."

This arresting reflection Mr. Merz has presented in such a fashion that his article may be read as an example of the informal essay as it is being written in America to-day. The temper of the essay is amiable. If adverse criticism of American life is to be found in it, this criticism is not expressed in Carlylean diatribe, but is brought home to the reader as a natural if not directly stated inference from the subject matter. The subject matter, with its abundance of detailed observations, speaks for itself. The reader is convinced because he feels in the essay the authenticity of things actually seen, remarks

* From *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, November, 1925.

actually overheard. He is certain the author has gone about with his eyes open. And since none of the details are irrelevant to the idea upon which the essay is built their cumulative effect is the more powerful.)

THE ONCE OPEN ROAD

THIS is a song of the once open road. Is there as much as five miles of highway left in the United States to-day without ten filling stations and at least one farmhouse called Ye Willowe Inne? Take your car beyond its accustomed haunts on a journey of exploration. The short stretch of road with its pop-stands, gas tanks, post cards, "hot dogs," ukuleles, kewpie dolls, and chocolate almond bars to which you are accustomed, and of which you think as something peculiar to your locality, is the broad and pulsing artery of a nation.

I am a traveler returned from a motor trip which was in no way exceptional, and which took me off the beaten track only when the signs said "Closed, Detour." It was a voyage of discovery none the less. It took me only a thousand miles or so; but this thousand was from New York into the Middle West—and there lay out over the headlights an impressive and hitherto unimagined Main Street, which showed no sign of stopping when I left it and which presumably runs on forever.

Perhaps you know the road. It is not hard to find. It begins almost anywhere, climbs a hill, and runs off between two rows of brightly painted numbers on its fences, trees, and posts. It is the Dixie Highway, or the Lincoln Highway, or the Lackawanna Trail, it is the Mohawk Trail, or the Yellowstone Trail, or the Roosevelt Million Dollar Highway, or the National Old Trails Road. It is a broad avenue, paved, and with our national talent for order we have plastered it with good advice. It is impossible to lose one's way, and difficult to lose one's life. Enough signals in the form of signboards, crossbars, death's heads, watchtowers, red lights, bells, and foghorns guard the approach to every danger spot to warn all but the insensible

that locomotives run on railway tracks. The slightest deviation from the straightway is forecast half a mile ahead. Hills have their lefts and rights. A white streak cuts the road in two, with a keep-to-your-own-side code protecting the ascending sheep from being fouled by the descending goats. There is every safeguard here which engineering can devise, every service which can be performed by free-air tanks and expert tire-changers, every dissuasion which can be brought to bear to keep travelers from self-destruction. This is the road triumphant.

Over it travels, for many hours of the day, a vast company of motors. Up and down the well-protected hills, over cross-roads carefully chalked for left-hand turns, and past such bits of roadside history on billboards as "Fremont—6 mi. from here —is the former home of the nineteenth President of the United States and a center of the cutlery trade," the long procession picks its way. America is cruising. It is bumper to bumper, sometimes, for a mile, with no interfering from the sidelines. Inside his gate a farmer pulls his team up short and counts a string of sixteen cars before he sees a loophole in the traffic. The pace is steady, seldom changing, just a little more than the law allows. Only rarely does the caravan slow down. Then horns toot and heads are thrust out nervously to look ahead. Somewhere a slow-mover is holding up the line. He creeps along, deaf, dumb, and blind, rebellion in his rear. More sirens blare, clutches shift, brakes bite. What is the matter up there, anyway? Somebody must be looking at the scenery! Doesn't that fellow know that if the rest of us don't get to Jamesport at 2:05 we shan't reach Creston by 2:36—and if we don't reach Creston by 2:36—well, then we shan't reach Smithtown by 3:45? . . . Not that there is anything special for us to do at Smithtown. . . .

One car slips by. Another car. A third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth. The pace picks up again. All this company is hurrying on, plainly in search of something badly wanted. Impressions? Yes. Impressions of a never-ending road, a thousand farms, no-

parking signs, successive towns passed through at twenty miles an hour, back-axles of no end of cars. Thrills? Yes. Thrills of scenery worth stopping for if there were only time, of police on motor cycles masked as fellow-tourists, of gorgeous sunsets well worth watching if the top were down, of getting home, at last, without a puncture. Trophies? Yes. Trophies to bring back memories of this day of travel: grass baskets, toy balloons, and paper-knives; bead bags, artificial fruit, and sea-shells with an echo. A family of six will drive two hundred miles to bring home three balls of glass with imitation butterflies inside. We are a great people for collecting local fauna. It was a cynical German who guessed, in war days, that France was fighting for Alsace-Lorraine, Britain for the Channel, and America for souvenirs.

II

When the Via Appia was still a highway to be bragged about, and young Roman gentlemen sped from Venusia to Tarentum at so many *milia* an hour, there were occasional monuments and arches on the way. Some of them still stand, landmarks of achievement. History was written here; for each arch marked a new outpost and a new foothold for Roman culture. We cannot do, in America, as the Romans did, either in or out of Rome. But at least we have marked our own highways with appropriate symbols. What the arch was to Rome the filling station is to America.

For, as the Romans built their highway step by step, first to Capua, then Beneventum, then on to the very heel of Italy at Brundusium, so the march of the filling station across country marks the progress of civilization which can live in new mobility, new comfort, and new speed. The change is unmistakable. Twenty years ago, before efficient manufacture and an inexhaustible supply of secondhand machines had brought motor travel within easy reach of the most average citizen, the filling station was an oddity on the road. The iron siphon, gargling

gasoline for its customer in a glass jar for a moment, before spewing it into a waiting motor, was still uninvented. These were the days when travel was a matter of luck and the tourist outward bound stoked up with gasoline and oil enough to carry him from one city to another. He could not look for succor on the road. Unless he thought about his gasoline ahead of time he would have to walk a mile and borrow from a farmer. We had not yet marked our Roman roads with arches. These were the days of extra fuel carried in a can, of rear-door tonneaus, acetylene lamps, and rims which were not demountable. The filling station, where it existed in its rudimentary form, was still the mere adjunct of a garage whose weightier business lay in repairs to motors. It had not yet isolated itself or evolved its own characteristic architecture. It had not yet taken to the road. Nor had America. The rise of the filling station is coincident with the conquest of America by Americans. Gas tanks began to line the road as we acquired the ability to run over an entire country instead of staying put at home.

We do not stay put at home. We ramble. It is left to the filling station to supply the nucleus of a new inter-city life. Here is a convenient stopping place, a friendly caravansary at which men pause, re-fuel, light pipes, counsel one another as to roads, trade warnings about speed traps, and pass the time of day. Here is amiability and conversation shorn of reticence: a first-edition Chevrolet is as good an introduction as a new Minerva. Here is a richer, creamier cross-section of America than is to be found on any Main Street: for the reason that many Main Streets have poured their quotas into it.

Nothing else in America caters to a clientele so cosmopolitan. A moving picture theater cannot do it. Neither can a church, nor a ball game, nor the benches in a park. For all these draw their crowds from just round the corner. The filling station draws its crowds from everywhere. On the heels of a Rolls from upper Fifth Avenue, making time on its way to Saratoga, come six Alabama negroes, male and female, in a rebuilt Ford. Ten

cars in a row may bear the license plates of five different states. All classes and kinds of men from all corners and sections of the country meet for a moment to discourse casually of fuels, markets, taxes, prohibition, Congress, Coolidge, Chaplin, Darwin, Darrow, glands, and cords. "I was talking last week with a fellow from down Florida-way," the Indiana farmer tells his neighbor, home from a jaunt to Michigan.

The filling station is a rare spot, in a country of magnificent distances, for the cross-pollination of ideas.

III

Travelers from abroad who come to this country looking for something characteristically American in America, and who hesitate between lower Broadway, the Pullman smoker, Ringling Brothers, a Kansas farmyard, the quick-lunch restaurant, Chautauqua, and a night at Coney Island, can do worse than choose an enterprising gas mart on a national highway.

For one thing, it is regular. And what aims to be typical of America must be regular. It must permit of as little deviation as possible from a standard which has been agreed upon as perfect, whether it is a standard for a sleeping-porch, a bath mat, or a successful magazine. That is what we ask of our newspapers and our happy endings in the movies, our breakfast foods, our political parties, and our Sunday afternoons. That is what we do not need to ask of our filling stations. They give it to us of their own accord. Conformity to our best standards of efficiency, equality, and speed is theirs, at all points in abundance.

For not by so much as three dents in the contour of its battered water-can does one filling station differ from another. Each is the product of a national art, perfected and unchanging. There is the low shelter with its gabled roof. There is the custodian in khaki trousers with a shirt open at the throat and

a slightly perceptible scorn for anything which lacks eight cylinders. There are the two great pumps outside his door, precisely like all other pumps, at every other station: consistently of the same height, the same diameter, the same cheery shade of red. There is the half-circle of cement driveway which makes an arc between these siphons, from the road outside. At one end of this cement is painted in white letters IN. At the other end is painted in white letters OUT. Not once in years, in this conformist nation, does it occur to any traveler to mutiny at these designations and attempt the OUT end for his IN.

Here, if it is for something typical of America that you are looking, is a scene which can be reproduced on any frontier of the country: people doing the same thing in the same way in vast numbers for the same purpose. It is not easy in any other place to find so much like-mindedness, or to observe so successfully that certain American customs have developed an uncompromising ritual of their own. A car pulls up. There follows, in regular order, the disagreement between passengers in the front seat and passengers in the rear seat as to what brand of gasoline was purchased at the last station, the dispute as to whether this new brand is the same or not the same, the corollary dispute as to whether it does or does not make the slightest difference, the descent from the car to stretch the legs, the salutation to the agent of the station, the setting of the gauge, the turning of the crank, the shaking of the hose for whatever residue remains inside, the comment from the purchaser, "That's right, I want the dividend," the observation from the rear seat, "Isn't Gus a scream?"

Blindfold a man, whisk him around the continent, set him down in an unknown city and, from watching its manners for an hour, he might guess its name. But put him down in front of a filling station, any filling station, and not even a sixth sense could tell him whether he was one mile from the Boston Public Library or lost on the Dakota plains.

IV

Listen to the conversation of two travelers. They have pulled up at the siphons to buy oil. They are complete strangers: voyagers who have passed, met once by chance, and will not meet again. The first is eating a "hot dog" and waiting for his change. He is, as the crow flies, sixteen miles from home. For a traveler on the open road, a client at the filling station, that is a shamefully short distance. Wild horses would not drag the admission from his lips.

He looks at the customer on his left, and nods, "How far you come?" he asks, then adds, "Come thirty-five since noon, myself. Not bad for an hour, eh?"

The other cocks his head. He too is eating a "hot dog," while his son removes the wrappings from a chocolate bar.

"No, not bad," he says. "Come about that far myself. Let's see. Been on the road an hour and a half and covered forty-six." This with an unseeing glance at his speedometer, which shows plainly that he has covered twenty-five.

"Come from the west, through Freeport?" asks the first.

"Freeport? Yes, that was the name of it. A little town about six miles back."

"Roads good?"

"Roads fair. One detour, with a lot of sand."

"*Sand——!*"

"Yes, heavy sand. Of course it don't make any difference to *this* car."

"My car either."

"This car is great on sand."

"Yeh? My car is a bear at sand."

"Hills, too."

"Hills? Say, this car of mine will go up hills like a greased pig shot out of a barrel. Why, coming up a hill near Schuyler Falls I passed three cars stalling, one of them an eight. Just have to touch the throttle——"

"I know. Same way with mine. Passed a Mercedes back there a way just like it was standing still. Say, this boat of mine——"

"And *distance!* Oh, boy, but this car is a bird for distance. Never had her out in my life but I got twenty to the gallon. Never had her out, I guess, but I got twenty-one——"

"Yeh? This car of mine'll just about get that. Nearer twenty-two, I think. And run? Say, runs like a locomotive. Never had to touch her. Haven't had the hood up in two years, I guess."

"No? Me neither. Longer than that, I guess. Must be nearer three. This car—well, good luck and I'll have a look at that sand of yours. Here's my change."

Clutches grind. Off on the trail they go, one headed east, one headed west. What does it matter that five miles down the road both will have their coats off, bending over smoky motors? This is a humdrum, mechanistic age, but are men to have no chance at all to tell each other sagas?

The Indians are dead. There are no Blackfeet left to conquer. There is no pioneering to be done, no corner of a wide country undiscovered, no stubborn soil which has never yielded to the plow. What is there left for Americans to make epics of, if not their motors?

V

There is, I suppose, something to be said for the Woolworth Building and the county fair, for the roller-coaster and the nineteenth hole, for the non-stop elevator to the fifteenth floor and the cut-rate excursion to Niagara—as the most typically American thing about America. But the filling station cannot be ignored. Bright siphons gleaming in the sunshine, it is a symbol of speed, of regularity, of deep desire for adventure: all three are attributes of the American scene. But beyond these three, and above all else, the filling station is symbolic of the looseness of our attachment to the soil.

No other people run around on wheels as we do. There are motor cars abroad; but not a tenth as many in all Europe. There are touring clubs in France; there are treks from England into Scotland; but only Americans suddenly decide after supper to bring the family motor from its shed and take it of an evening for a run which would be thought a day's expedition anywhere in Europe. There is constantly in progress in America a migration beside which, from the point of view of numbers, the flight of the chosen people into Egypt was a mere local disturbance of a minor order. A few thousand people crossed the Nile. Hundreds of thousands cross the Mississippi. There are nineteen million automobiles in the United States. Assume that at any given moment no more than a mere one per cent of them is on the road. That still means one hundred and ninety thousand cars, forever flitting from one filling station to another, with half a million people on their backs. Where are they going, why are they speeding, what do they hope to find?

The spoils and knowledge they bring home are no answer to these questions. Surely it is worth no man's while to drive three hundred miles to add another pennant to his string, or to scurry across country for the ostensible purpose of viewing the scenery, without stopping anywhere en route save for a change of tires, or to bring back from a point one hundred and eighty-three miles distant an impression of two dozen policemen and seven cities all alike, or to hurry half the day for the apparent purpose of arriving at a point far enough away to make it necessary to turn at once and hurry home. No rational explanation can suffice for wandering so purposeless. It is not a matter of reason. It is something in the blood.

For the history of this country is the history of the chase. First there was the settlement of the East, then the push to the West, then the doubling back of those who could not find what they sought behind the hills and looked for it again in the haunts of their forefathers. We are a young nation, and the roving spirit is still robust in us. If we cannot rove for the purpose of settling

a continent, we shall at least rove, daily or nightly, for the pleasure of seeing something, anything, or seeing nothing and merely having been. Europe may stand fast, in its lōve of stability and a settled home. Ours is freedom from the soil and independence of the dead.

Horns toot. One car slips past the slow-mover who is holding up the line. Another car. A third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth. The pace picks up again.

Twilight in September. Over the hills winds the caravan: lunches gone, lights twinkling, tonneaus full of goldenrod, America revisited.

SENTIMENTAL AMERICA *

H. S. Canby

(Mr. Canby was formerly professor of English in the Sheffield School of Yale University. During this period of his career, he instigated the composition of a text-book on rhetoric that became almost as renowned among freshmen in our American universities as the texts of Erasmus were among the scholars of the Renaissance. For a decade "Canby and Others," as the back of the book led us to call it, was the standard text in many institutions, and one cannot yet say that it has been superseded.

Nevertheless, Professor Canby found this reputation insufficient. He had been for nine years an assistant editor of the *Yale Review,* when he decided to devote himself chiefly to editorial work. Between the years 1920 and 1924, therefore, he acted as editor of the Literary Review of the New York *Evening Post.* In the latter year he completed his emancipation, and set up his own *Saturday Review of Literature.* Within the short period of its existence, this new review of his has become one of the organs of opinion about literature most influential among our intellectuals. The policy of the editor has been to give qualified writers of national reputation free rein in the expression of their own opinions. The magazine has not sought through its editorial policy to align itself with any particular faction of thought now prevalent.

Somewhat of the same impersonal tolerance has characterized Mr. Canby's own writings. In the essay included here, for instance, he does not berate the American public for their excess of sympathy for " the noble" or of pity for "the downtrodden." He does not censure them for reading the novels of Miss Porter

* From *Definitions.* Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1922.

or of Mr. Wright. He finds the impulse at bottom a healthy one, and only admonishes us to see to it that our emotion does not blind us to a correct analysis of the facts which are supposed to justify its existence.)

SENTIMENTAL AMERICA

THE Oriental may be inscrutable, but he is no more puzzling than the average American. We admit that we are hard, keen, practical,—the adjectives that every casual European applies to us,—and yet any book-store window or railway news-stand will show that we prefer sentimental magazines and books. Why should a hard race—if we are hard—read soft books?

By soft books, by sentimental books, I do not mean only the kind of literature best described by the word "squashy." I doubt whether we write or read more novels and short stories of the tear-dripped or hyper-emotional variety than other nations. Germany is—or was—full of such soft stuff. It is highly popular in France, although the excellent taste of French criticism keeps it in check. Italian popular literature exudes sentiment; and the sale of "squashy" fiction in England is said to be threatened only by an occasional importation of an American "best-seller." We have no bad eminence here. Sentimentalists with enlarged hearts are international in habitat, although, it must be admitted, especially popular in America.

When a critic, after a course in American novels and magazines, declares that life, as it appears on the printed page here, is fundamentally sentimentalized, he goes much deeper than "mushiness" with his charge. He means, I think, that there is an alarming tendency in American fiction to dodge the facts of life—or to pervert them. He means that in most popular books only red-blooded, optimistic people are welcome. He means that material success, physical soundness, and the gratification of the emotions have the right of way. He means that men and women (except the comic figures) shall be presented, not as they are, but as we should like to have them, according to a judgment tempered by

nothing more searching than our experience with an unusually comfortable, safe, and prosperous mode of living. Everyone succeeds in American plays and stories—if not by good thinking, why then by good looks or good luck. A curious society the research student of a later date might make of it—an upper world of the colorless, successful, illustrated by chance-saved collar advertisements and magazine covers; an under world of grotesque scamps, clowns, and hyphenates drawn from the comic supplement; and all—red-blooded hero and modern gargoyle alike—always in good humor.

I am not touching in this picture merely to attack it. It has been abundantly attacked; what it needs is explanation. For there is much in this bourgeois, good-humored American literature of ours which rings true, which is as honest an expression of our individuality as was the more austere product of antebellum New England. If American sentimentality does invite criticism, American sentiment deserves defense.

Sentiment—the response of the emotions to the appeal of human nature—is cheap, but so are many other good things. The best of the ancients were rich in it. Homer's chieftains wept easily. So did Shakespeare's heroes. Adam and Eve shed "some natural tears" when they left the Paradise which Milton imagined for them. A heart accessible to pathos, to natural beauty, to religion, was a chief requisite for the protagonist of Victorian literature. Even Becky Sharp was touched—once—by Amelia's moving distress.

Americans, to be sure, do not weep easily; but if they make equivalent responses to sentiment, that should not be held against them. If we like "sweet" stories, or "strong"—which means emotional—stories, our taste is not thereby proved to be hopeless, or our national character bad. It is better to be creatures of even sentimental sentiment, with the author of "The Rosary," than to see the world *only* as it is portrayed by the pens of Bernard Shaw and Anatole France. The first is deplorable; the second is dangerous. I should deeply regret the day when a simple story

of honest American manhood winning a million and a sparkling, piquant sweetheart lost all power to lull my critical faculty and warm my heart. I doubt whether any literature has ever had too much of honest sentiment.

Good Heavens! Because some among us insist that the mystic rose of the emotions shall be painted a brighter pink than nature allows, are the rest to forego glamour? Or because, to view the matter differently, psychology has shown what happens in the brain when a man falls in love, and anthropology has traced marriage to a care for property rights, are we to suspect the idyllic in literature wherever we find it? Life is full of the idyllic; and no anthropologist will ever persuade the reasonably romantic youth that the sweet and chivalrous passion which leads him to mingle reverence with desire for the object of his affections, is nothing but an idealized property sense. Origins explain very little, after all. The bilious critics of sentiment in literature have not even honest science behind them.

I have no quarrel with traffickers in simple emotion—with such writers as James Lane Allen and James Whitcomb Riley, for example. But the average American is not content with such sentiment as theirs. He wants a more intoxicating brew—to be persuaded that, once you step beyond your own experience, feeling rules the world. He wants—I judge by what he reads—to make sentiment at least ninety per cent efficient, even if a dream-America, superficially resemblant to the real, but far different in tone, must be created by the obedient writer in order to satisfy him. His sentiment has frequently to be sentimentalized before he will pay for it. And to this fault, which he shares with other modern races, he adds the other heinous sin of sentimentalism, the refusal to face the facts.

This sentimentalizing of reality—to invent a term—is far more dangerous than the romantic sentimentalizing of the "squashy" variety. It is to be found in sex-stories, which carefully observe decency of word and deed, where the conclusion is always in accord with conventional morality, yet whose characters are clearly

immoral, indecent, and would so display themselves if the tale were truly told. It is to be found in stories of "big business," where trickery and rascality are made virtuous at the end by sentimental baptism. If I choose for the hero of my novel a director in an American trust; if I make him an accomplice in certain acts of ruthless economic tyranny; if I make it clear that at first he is merely subservient to a stronger will, and that the acts he approves are in complete disaccord with his private moral code—why then, if the facts should be dragged to the light, if he is made to realize the exact nature of his career, how can I end my story? It is evident that my hero possesses little insight and less firmness of character. He is not a hero; he is merely a tool. In, let us say, eight cases out of ten, his curve is already plotted. It leads downward—not necessarily along the villain's path, but toward moral insignificance.

And yet, I cannot end my story that way for Americans. There *must* be a grand moral revolt. There must be resistance, triumph, and not only spiritual, but also financial recovery. And this, likewise, is sentimentality. Even Booth Tarkington, in his excellent "Turmoil," had to dodge the logical issue of his story; had to make his hero exchange a practical literary idealism for a very impractical, even though a commercial, utopianism, in order to emerge apparently successful at the end of the book. A story such as the Danish Nexö's "Pelle the Conqueror," where pathos and the idyllic, each intense, each beautiful, are made convincing by an undeviating truth to experience, would seem to be almost impossible of production just now in America.

It is not enough to rail at this false fiction. The chief duty of criticism is to explain. The best corrective of bad writing is a knowledge of why it is bad. We get the fiction we deserve, precisely as we get the government we deserve—or perhaps, in each case, a little better. Why are we sentimental? When that question is answered, it is easier to understand the defects and the virtues of American fiction. And the answer lies in the traditional American philosophy of life.

To say that the American is an idealist, is to commit a thoroughgoing platitude. Like most platitudes, the statement is annoying because, from one point of view, it is indisputably just, while from another it does not seem to fit the facts. With regard to our tradition, it is indisputable. Of the immigrants who since the seventeenth century have been pouring into this continent, a portion large in number, larger still in influence, has been possessed of motives which, in part at least, were idealistic. If it was not the desire for religious freedom that urged them, it was the desire for personal freedom; if not political liberty, why then economic liberty (for this too is idealism), and the opportunity to raise the standard of life. And of course all these motives were strongest in that earlier immigration which has done most to fix the state of mind and body which we call being American. I need not labor the argument. Our political and social history supports it; our best literature demonstrates it; for no men have been more idealistic than the American writers whom we have consented to call great. Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Whitman—was idealism ever more thoroughly incarnate than in them?

And this idealism—to risk again a platitude—has been in the air of America. It has permeated our religious sects, and created several of them. It has given tone to our thinking, and even more to our feeling. I do not say that it has always, or even usually, determined our actions, although the Civil War is proof of its power. Again and again it has gone aground roughly when the ideal met a condition of living—a fact that will provide the explanation for which I seek. But optimism, "boosting," muckraking (not all of its manifestations are pretty), social service, religious, municipal, democratic reform, indeed the "uplift" generally, is evidence of the vigor, the bumptiousness of the inherited American tendency to pursue the ideal. No one can doubt that in this generation we believe, at least, in idealism.

Nevertheless, so far as the average individual is concerned, with just his share and no more of the race-tendency, this idealism

has been suppressed, and in some measure perverted. It is this which explains, I think, American sentimentalism.

Consider, for example, the ethics of conventional American society. The American ethical tradition is perfectly definite and tremendously powerful. It belongs, furthermore, to a population far larger than the "old American" stock, for it has been laboriously inculcated in our schools and churches, and impressively driven home by newspaper, magazine, and book. I shall not presume to analyze it save where it touches literature. There it maintains a definite attitude toward all sex-problems: the Victorian, which is not necessarily, or even probably, a bad one. Man should be chaste, and proud of his chastity. Woman must be so. It is the ethical duty of the American to hate, or at least to despise, all deviations, and to pretend—for the greater prestige of the law—that such sinning is exceptional, at least in America. And this is the public morality he believes in, whatever may be his private experience in actual living. In business, it is the ethical tradition of the American, inherited from a rigorous Protestant morality, to be square, to play the game without trickery, to fight hard but never meanly. Over-reaching is justifiable when the other fellow has equal opportunities to be "smart"; lying, tyranny—never. And though the opposites of all these laudable practices come to pass, he must frown on them in public, deny their rightness even to the last cock-crow—especially in the public press.

American political history is a long record of idealistic tendencies toward democracy, working painfully through a net of graft, pettiness, sectionalism, and bravado, with constant disappointment for the idealist who believes, traditionally, in the intelligence of the crowd. American social history is a glaring instance of how the theory of equal dignity for all men can entangle itself with caste distinctions, snobbery, and the power of wealth. American economic history betrays the pioneer helping to kick down the ladder that he himself had raised toward equal opportunity for all. American literary history—especially contem-

porary literary history—reflects the result of all this for the American mind. The sentimental in our literature is a direct consequence.

The disease is easily acquired. Mr. Smith, a broker, finds himself in an environment of "schemes" and "deals" in which the quality of mercy is strained, and the wind is decidedly not tempered to the shorn lamb. After all, business is business. He shrugs his shoulders and takes his part. But his unexpended fund of native idealism—if, as is most probable, he has his share—seeks its due satisfaction. He cannot use it in business; so he takes it out in a novel or a play where, quite contrary to his observed experience, ordinary people like himself act nobly, with a success that is all the more agreeable for being unexpected. His wife, a woman with strange stirrings about her heart, with motions toward beauty, and desires for a significant life and rich, satisfying experience, exists in day-long pettiness, gossips, frivols, scolds, with money enough to do what she pleases, and nothing vital to do. She also relieves her pent-up idealism in plays or books—in high-wrought, "strong" novels, not in adventures in society such as the kitchen admires, but in stories with violent moral and emotional crises, whose characters, no matter how unlifelike, have "strong" thoughts, and make vital decisions; succeed or fail significantly. Her brother, the head of a wholesale dry-goods firm, listens to the stories the drummers bring home of night life on the road, laughs, says to himself regretfully that the world has to be like that; and then, in logical reaction, demands purity and nothing but aggressive purity in the books of the public library.

The hard man goes in for philanthropy (never before so frequently as in America); the one-time "boss" takes to picture-collecting; the railroad wrecker gathers rare editions of the Bible; and tens of thousands of humbler Americans carry their inherited idealism into the necessarily sordid experiences of life in an imperfectly organized country, suppress it for fear of being thought "cranky" or "soft," and then, in their imagination and all that

feeds their imagination, give it vent. You may watch the process any evening at the movies or the melodrama, on the trolley-car or in the easy chair at home.

This philosophy of living, which I have called American idealism, is in its own nature sound, as is proved in a hundred directions where it has had full play. Suppressed idealism, like any other suppressed desire, becomes unsound. One does not have to follow Freud and his school into their sex-pathology in order to believe that. And here lies the ultimate cause of the taste for sentimentalism in the American *bourgeoisie*. An undue insistence upon happy endings, regardless of the premises of the story, and a craving for optimism everywhere, anyhow, are sure signs of a "morbid complex," and to be compared with some justice to the craving for drugs in a "dry" town. We must look for psychological as well as economic and geographical causes for mental peculiarities exhibiting themselves in literature. No one can doubt the effect of the suppression by the Puritan discipline of that instinctive love of pleasure and liberal experience common to us all. Its unhealthy reaction is visible in every old American community. No one who faces the facts can deny the result of the suppression by commercial, bourgeois, prosperous America of our native idealism. The student of society may find its dire effects in politics, in religion, and in social intercourse. The critic cannot overlook them in literature; for it is in the realm of the imagination that idealism, direct or perverted, does its best or its worst.

Sentiment is not perverted idealism. Sentiment *is* idealism of a mild and not too masculine variety. If it has sins, they are sins of omission, not commission. Our fondness for sentiment proves that our idealism, if a little loose in the waist-band and puffy in the cheeks, is still hearty, still capable of active mobilization, like those comfortable French husbands whose plump and smiling faces, careless of glory, careless of everything but thrift and good living, are nevertheless figured on a page whose superscription reads, "Dead on the field of honor."

The novels, the plays, the short stories, of sentiment may prefer sweetness, perhaps, to truth, the feminine to the masculine virtues, but we waste ammunition in attacking them. There never was, I suppose, a great literature of sentiment, for not even the "Sentimental Journey" is truly great. But no one can make a diet exclusively of "noble" literature; the charming has its own cosy corner across from the tragic (and a much bigger corner at that). Our uncounted amorists of tail-piece song and illustrated story provide the readiest means of escape from the somewhat uninspiring life that most men and women are living just now in America.

The sentimental, however,—whether because of an excess of sentiment softening into "slush," or of a morbid optimism, or of a weak-eyed distortion of the facts of life,—is perverted. It needs to be cured, and its cure is more truth. But this cure, I very much fear, is not entirely, or even chiefly, in the power of the "regular practitioner," the honest writer. He can be honest; but if he is much more honest than his readers, they will not read him. As Professor Lounsbury once said, a language grows corrupt only when its speakers grow corrupt, and mends, strengthens, and becomes pure with them. So with literature. We shall have less sentimentality in American literature when our accumulated store of idealism disappears in a laxer generation; or when it finds due vent in a more responsible, less narrow, less monotonously prosperous life than is lived by the average reader of fiction in America. I would rather see our literary taste damned forever than have the first alternative become—as it has not yet—a fact. The second, in the years of world-war, we placed, unwillingly, perhaps unconsciously, upon the knees of the gods.

All this must not be taken in too absolute a sense. There are medicines, and good ones, in the hands of writers and of critics, to abate, if not to heal, this plague of sentimentalism. I have stated ultimate causes only. They are enough to keep the mass of Americans reading sentimentalized fiction until some

fundamental change has come, not strong enough to hold back the van of American writing, which is steadily moving toward restraint, sanity, and truth. Every honest composition is a step forward in the cause; and every clear-minded criticism.

But one must doubt the efficacy, and one must doubt the healthiness, of reaction into cynicism and sophisticated cleverness. There are curious signs, especially in what we may call the literature of New York, of a growing sophistication that sneers at sentiment and the sentimental alike. "Magazines of cleverness" have this for their keynote, although as yet the satire is not always well aimed. There are abundant signs that the generation just coming forward will rejoice in such a pose. It is observable now in the colleges, where the young literati turn up their noses at everything American,—magazines, best-sellers, or one-hundred-night plays,—and resort for inspiration to the English school of anti-Victorians: to Schnitzler with his brilliant Viennese cynicism; less commonly, because he is more subtle, to Anatole France. Their pose is not altogether to be blamed, and the men to whom they resort are models of much that is admirable; but there is little promise for American literature in exotic imitation. To see ourselves prevailingly as others see us may be good for modesty, but does not lead to a self-confident native art. And it is a dangerous way for Americans to travel. We cannot afford such sophistication yet. The English wits experimented with cynicism in the court of Charles II, laughed at blundering Puritan morality, laughed at country manners, and were whiffed away because the ideals they laughed at were better than their own. Idealism is not funny, however censurable its excesses. As a race we have too much sentiment to be frightened out of the sentimental by a blasé cynicism.

At first glance the flood of moral literature now upon us—social-conscience stories, scientific plays, platitudinous "moralities" that tell us how to live—may seem to be another protest against sentimentalism. And that the French and English examples have been so warmly welcomed here may seem another in-

dication of a reaction on our part. I refer especially to those "hard" stories, full of vengeful wrath, full of warnings for the race that dodges the facts of life. H. G. Wells is the great exemplar, with his sociological studies wrapped in description and tied with a plot. In a sense, such stories are certainly to be regarded as a protest against truth-dodging, against cheap optimism, against "slacking," whether in literature or in life. But it would be equally just to call them another result of suppressed idealism, and to regard their popularity in America as proof of the argument which I have advanced in this essay. Excessively didactic literature is often a little unhealthy. In fresh periods, when life runs strong and both ideals and passions find ready issue into life, literature has no burdensome moral to carry. It digests its moral. Homer digested his morals. They transfuse his epics. So did Shakespeare. His world is predominantly moral; but his stories are not forged into machines contrived to hammer home neglected truth.

Not so with the writers of the social-conscience school. They are in a rage over wicked, wasteful man. Their novels are bursted notebooks—sometimes neat and orderly notebooks, like Mr. Galsworthy's or our own Ernest Poole's, sometimes haphazard ones, like those of Mr. Wells, but always explosive with reform. These gentlemen know very well what they are about, especially Mr. Wells, the lesser artist, perhaps, as compared with Galsworthy, but the shrewder and possibly the greater man. The very sentimentalists, who go to novels to exercise the idealism that they cannot use in life, will read these unsentimental stories, although their lazy impulses would never spur them on toward any truth not sweetened by a tale.

And yet, one feels that the social attack might have been more convincing if free from its compulsory service to fiction; that these novels and plays might have been better literature if the authors did not study life in order that they might be better able to preach. Wells and Galsworthy also have suffered from suppressed idealism, although it would be unfair to say

that perversion was the result. So have our muck-rakers, who, very characteristically, exhibit the disorder in a more complex and a much more serious form, since to a distortion of facts they have often enough added hypocrisy and commercialism. It is part of the price we pay for being sentimental.

The American sentimentalists, two million readers strong, are intrenched behind ramparts of indifference, which no shrapnel fire of criticism or countermine of honest writing can ever destroy. We can take a trench or two, blow up some particularly obnoxious citadel, and trouble their security by exploding bombs of truth; but defeat must come finally from within their own lines.

If I am correct in my analysis, we are suffering here in America, not from a plague of bad taste merely, nor only from a lack of real education among our myriads of readers, nor from decadence —least of all, this last. It is a disease of our own particular virtue which has infected us—idealism, suppressed and perverted. A less commercial, more responsible America, perhaps a less prosperous and more spiritual America, will hold fast to its sentiment, but be weaned from its sentimentality.

LOUISIANA: (MADAME DE LA LOUISIANE) *

BASIL THOMPSON

(This article first appeared in the *New York Nation* in 1922. It was one of a series of lively and highly provocative articles dealing with "These United States." The writers of these articles followed widely different methods in dealing with their subjects and their personal attitudes varied from the tender and filial regard of a native son or daughter to the unconcealed hostility and contempt of an alien. The result was a series, interesting for its diversity of material and point of view rather than for its dependability or accuracy.

According to William James real culture lives by sympathies and admirations, not by dislikes and disdains. Surely the series of articles in question well illustrates the fact that an attitude which limits itself to dislike and disdain can seldom tell the whole truth about anything. This article about Louisiana is not thus limited. It is an admirable piece of sympathetic interpretation and characterization, written with a zest that captures something of the glamour of the material. Speaking broadly, America is a country without a past and to the average American the past does not exist, in a very real sense, for more than a generation or two. We are beginning to be aware of our poverty though, and to cherish more fully places and landmarks about which time has left some of its mellowing and enriching residue.

Basil Thompson was born in New Orleans in 1892. After receiving an A. B. degree in Loyola University in 1910, he studied law in Tulane and in Washington and Lee University. Since

* From *These United States*, First Series. Boni and Liveright.

1913 he has been with the Equitable Life Assurance Society, for a time in Chicago, but since 1916 in his beloved New Orleans. He has also taken part in editorial work and has contributed frequently to magazines.)

LOUISIANA: (MADAME DE LA LOUISIANE)

A CLEAR and unimpassioned visualization of so unique a commonwealth as Louisiana becomes a complex and disquieting performance, especially when your raconteur is a native son not wholly lacking in sentiment toward his delightfully volatile soil-mother. Native-born Louisianians, Kentuckians, and Virginians, unlike native-born Georgians, Arkansans, and West Virginians, must of necessity retain some sly regard for the romantic, historic, and traditional foibles of their several *terrae matres*.

Madame de la Louisiane fairly screams romance. At once piquant, naïve, effete, blasé, and bumptious, she presents to her sister commonwealths more or less the same aspect that Mam'selle Nouvelle-Orléans, her capricious daughter, exhibits to her staider cosmopolitan brethren. Though her glitter, her arrogance, her superficiality, her little minauderies are beyond question, beneath the veneer one glimpses her true personality—elusive, coy, droll, if you will, but very real, quaint, colorful.

Madame de la Louisiane is woman and mother. Regard her thus. Only as woman and mother may one detect her authentic gesture—her history, sentiment, tradition, her odd little quirks of character. She is, moreover, "a woman with a past." But she is, too, a mother humoring the whims of her favorite child, Mam'selle Nouvelle-Orléans. Her whole life whirls about this elder daughter, whose manner and insouciance are inimitable; whose fame and dark beauty have gone the world around; who is not, despite all her extravagance, ever anything but herself. Let us consider her *en fête, en costume de bal,* arrayed at her best—as one should always consider lovely woman.

It is February. The air is crisp, clean, invigorating. You have just had an absinthe in the "Assassins' Den" of the Old

Absinthe House. Monsieur Cazenave, on learning you are down for the Mardi Gras from Hoboken, Kansas City, or the Yukon, unbends graciously. He concocts for you an absinthe, cool, milky, satisfying. Your gullet titillates deliciously. You have another, this one frappéd by way of change. For the nonce, Mr. Volstead is relegated to the limbo of the unborn. You sip your drink dreamily, reminiscently. Shades of Paul Verlaine and Jean Lafitte! Where are you? Parnassus, Paris, or Nouvelle-Orléans? The last indubitably.

The hoot of horns, the cries of masqueraders intrude from the street below. It is Mardi Gras in New Orleans in the year 1922. There must be some mistake. You are dreaming. You are drunk. "L'addition, M'sieu?" Your reverie is disturbed. The bill settled, Félix, the garçon, offers you hat and top coat. You are out in the street—Bourbon Street at the intersection of Bienville. You walk toward Canal, surrounded by a riot of color and sound. The deliciously treacherous absinthe seeps into your brain. The day is rich, glorious; the air, tonic; the people, mad, young, wanton. . . .

A masked girl in cotton tights bumps into you. "Pardon, M'sieu," she laughs and is away. A ten-year gamin, in Charlie Chaplin make-up, notes your abstraction—"Hey, Mister, come out of it! Git in the push." He supplies the push. You are aroused. You look about eagerly, excitedly. You nudge your friend. You ply him with innumerable questions. "Rex" is making down Canal Street. Bands are playing. Club galleries gleam with pretty frocks and faces. A storm of confetti bursts upon you. The Carnival colors are everywhere. Buildings, windows, galleries, signs, banners, the people themselves blaze with color. It is a vital, an electric pageant, veritably charged with passion, imagination, beauty, madness. . . .

A slight picture. Ineffectual, if you will, but where else in all America may you glimpse it. And Mardi Gras Day is but one day in the year, and New Orleans but one section of Louisiana. None the less it is this carnival spirit that pervades New Orleans,

and it is this New Orleans spirit that pervades Louisiana. Louisiana is New Orleans and, by the same token, New Orleans Louisiana. This despite great sugar and cotton plantations, the rice and sulphur industries, the oil fields, the timberlands, the salt islands, the big game preserves, the State capital at Baton Rouge, the "city" of Shreveport, the insane asylum at Jackson, and the protestations of upstaters.

Perhaps it were not amiss to rehearse here somewhat of the history of this *soi-disant grande dame* among States. Parenthetically one begs your indulgence a space wherein Madame's past is, one trusts, tactfully if not entertainingly, reviewed. In speaking of a lady's past, however, it seems not gallant to become personal lest, by the token, one also becomes odious. Thus shall be given over, for the time, Madame's femininity as such and her origin sketched in the broad, impersonal, though be it confessed, lack-luster manner of historiographers.

Aboriginally *locus* la Louisiane was a body of water, a geological sea. More late, a prehistoric dwelling-place for amphibious brutes, where primitive peoples built shell mounds to climb upon in high-water time. These mounds excavated to-day betray a certain native art, evidenced in rude bowls, earthen vases, stone implements. Later the Indians: some indigenous, like the Attakapas; some nomadic, probably from Mexico, like the sun-worshiping Natchez tribe; in all five or six groups, living each a community life.

The early roads of la Louisiane were waterways. The pirogue, a sort of canoe built for four, was means of transit from bayou to river and river to bayou. Wild fowl and buffalo served to victual the winter season. Fish and local crustaceans sufficed the summer. Fruit and nuts, notably the pecan, were plentiful. Corn was planted. Rice grew naturally. With nothing to do, with no need to go anywhere, with labor done by the women (days that are no more!) it was usually too warm or too rainy deliberately to make war, so even fighting, a pastime in the "Cane-

tuckie" country, could not cajole these pre-Caucasian Louisianians out of their native indolence.

But the forest stillness of the swamp country, just below the mouth of Red River, was soon broken by the clanging armor of Hernandez de Soto's men. Moscoso buried De Soto in the waters of the Mississippi, and with the remnant of his conquistidores floated on a raft down past the site of Nouvelle-Orléans, putting out upon the Gulf of Mexico. The Spanish were not then seriously impressed with the somber, mossgrown wilderness of this future American commonwealth, and so did not formally include it except as an extension of Florida.

A century or so passed before Père Marquette and the merchant Joliet, followed by Robert, Cavalier de La Salle and Tonty of the Iron Hand, came down the river from Canada. The Fleur-de-lys was raised at the mouth of the Mississippi. The country, the entire valley from the Alleghenies to the Rockies of the West was, with much ceremony, named la Louisiane, after *le grand monarque* Louis Quatorze and his Queen-Mother, Anne of Austria. Thenceforward, we have recorded the familiar story of Louisiana.

After pioneering discoveries by La Salle came settlement by Iberville at Biloxi. The French King sent over ships and soldiers. Hardy men and women followed to hew wood, draw water, and procreate. In and about were the omnipresent Jesuits, lending first aid to the sordid lives of a people whose very existences depended on daily exertion and innumerable hardships. The story of the province of Louisiana—a French colony five months' sail from France; barely known to exist by the people of Europe; moving slowly onward; filling its requirements to the best of its abilities; taking lessons from its Indian neighbors in fishing and providing food; waiting ever for encouragement from the King—this chapter in the history of Louisiana was but one of desperate effort to survive flood, fever, and famine. Yet stout hearts prevailed and another generation was gradually born —the Creole, so dubbed in France. Here upsprang this new

American breed, scarcely aware of the Fleur-de-lys, breathing the air of "freedom" and "liberty" along with their brethren—bird, bear, and Indian.

A ship came over in 1766 bringing from Europe a new Governor and a new flag. The King of France had handed over to his cousin, the King of Spain, the colony nominally cared for since the days of John Law. After the Mississippi Bubble had burst, the Province de la Louisiane ceased longer to interest the Court of Paris. The Creole at last had something to break monotony. He revolted. Cutting the hawser that held the Governor's ship to the levee, he sent word by the same ship as it floated to the gulf that, "We, the people, if no longer subjects of France, elect to be subject only to ourselves." Strange that a declaration arrived at in Mecklenburg and Lexington some years later should have been born down in the forests of the delta, still born, if you will, for the revolting group was executed in 1769.

Cession of Louisiana to the United States in 1803 affixed to the young republic more territory than all it had until this time possessed. From a chain of States on the Atlantic seaboard, whose farthest west was then the Ohio country, Oregon, Texas, and California alone remained to complete the vast bulk that forms the United States to-day.

If the condiments that go to make up the type now known as American depend on quantity and proportion of Caucasian blood, this Latin strain as diffused through the French and Spanish Creole forms a nice balance to the Swede and German of the West, and the New England and Virginia strains of Anglo-Saxon. Most persons should know, by this, that the Creole is Latin-American, a white man, and not, as sometimes vulgarly believed, *café au lait* French mulatto. In Louisiana the Creole is white. He is the direct descendant of the Spanish and French pioneer. The term in its original connotation implied a colonial Frenchman, one born in the colonies. But there are four distinct varieties of Frenchmen in Louisiana: the Frenchman, born

in France, the Creole native of French descent, the San Domingan Creole, and the Nova Scotian Acadian or Cajan.

This Cajan is worth a word. In the Teche country—southern Louisiana—he preponderates, speaking a peculiar dialect or patois quite at variance with that of the Creole. In the towns of St. Martinsville and New Iberia this emasculated lingo is almost the common tongue, certainly *la langue de famille*. It is estimated that some fifteen hundred Cajans of those expelled from Nova Scotia settled in Louisiana. They now number one hundred and fifty thousand or thereabouts and for the most part adhere to their native speech. Of course, the Cajan and the Creole must not be mentioned in the same breath. The Creole is, in his kind, a cultured though somewhat decadent type; the Cajan, in his, a crude, ingenuous one. An interesting fact in connection with the French-speaking people of Louisiana is the publication, at the present time, of several purely French papers scattered over the State, and in New Orleans of two weeklies: *L'Abeille*, the earliest existing journal printed in the Mississippi Valley, and *La Guêpe*. These titles are not without significance but one cannot help but feel their sting has gone.

But I digress. When Louisiana came under American dominion in 1803 it included a great variety of new citizens, the majority French speaking, but all apparently eager to gain identity and cut away from European traditions. The battle of New Orleans proved an excellent baptism. From that time on until the Civil War a gradual Americanization took place. The Confederacy failing, Louisiana was to be born again. This time the process included the customary "sackcloth and ashes." Reconstruction, slavery abolished, brought the individual white man into action as an entity. He, of course, has remade himself, and recently, when our latest American army assembled, looking down the line there seemed but one composite face. Gray veterans of previous wars would indeed have had a difficult job to pick out the grandson of Johnny Reb—Cajan, Creole, cowboy, cracker, Hoosier, and New Englander, all looked alike.

Louisiana to-day! One pauses and ponders, withal a bit ruefully, Louisiana to-day! "Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?" Master Villon's cry, sounding down the ages, bemouthed and hackneyed as it is, was not more pat in his application than it is to the subject in hand. Where are the leaves of yesteryear? Where are the Louisianians of the past? The buccaneers, pirates, filibusters, scented quadroons, gentlemen duellists, starched Creole ladies, lordly planters, sugar barons, and impeccable barristers —the odd fish, the aristocracy of pre-Civil War days? Where are the clubs, the cotillions, the liqueurs, the fine old customs and courtesies of the past? What has become of Madame Macarty and Dominique You; Maspero's Exchange and the Théâtre d'Orléans; the Baron and Baronesa de Pontalba; the Carondelets? Where are the haunts of Lafitte, Humbert, Pêpe Llula, Croghan the Sandusky hero, Lopez, Walker, Walt Whitman, and Lafcadio Hearn?

What remains? A deal. The life, the spirit, the essence of Louisiana, what are they but heritage of the past? Louisiana is a Catholic State and New Orleans is a Catholic city. When we say Catholic we mean none of your invading, upstart, alien populations. The Catholic church is part of Louisiana, bone of her bone, moss of her oaks. Bigotry, that so afflicts some of our Southern and perhaps some of our New England States, is little known here, unless perhaps in the extreme north where pioneer "red necks" from South and North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia came in to settle. In southern Louisiana and New Orleans there is little intolerance, but an intense spirit of rivalry between the Catholic and Protestant elements, the rivalry of each trying to out-distance the other in the social, economic, and educational race. This last accounts perhaps for the recent gratifying reduction in Louisiana's illiteracy. By government census of 1910 she was rated the most illiterate State of the Union with 23.9 per cent of her population unable to read or write; but the census of 1920 shows a reduction of 7.1 per cent as against 1.7 for the whole country.

That Louisiana has produced little or nothing in the creative arts is a fact that can't be blinked. In poetry (quite amusingly) Adah Isaacs Menken—burlesque queen, "intimate" of Dickens, Swinburne, the elder Dumas, and Gautier; wife of Heenan the prize-fighter, "Orpheus C. Kerr" the humorist, and a brace of less noted husbands—despite her obvious extravagance and lack of technique for sheer dramatic interest tops the list. The Menken legend is certainly the most delightful in the literary and theatrical history of the State. In music the older heads cry up L. M. Gottschalk—a composer of ante-bellum days. In fiction George W. Cable, who has treated of the Creole in satirical vein, is as yet unchallenged. The Cable novels certainly rank first in the old-guard fictional output of our State. Then we have Grace King, not so much novelist as *raconteur,* charming in her kind. And then Professor Brander Matthews! who according to a native "has forsworn his birthplace after acquiring honors at Columbia University and environs." Our historians are sturdier. To Charles Gayarré goes the crown. His "History of Louisiana" has almost attained to the distinction of a classic. The late Dr. Alcée Fortier ranks perhaps second, though François Xavier Martin is conceded the sounder student.

Still, in the creative arts Louisiana has produced little or nothing. True, Walt Whitman, Lafcadio Hearn, Eugene Field, Degas the painter, and others sojourned, found inspiration for and accomplished some of their finest work in New Orleans. Yet where is our poet? and where our painter? and where our novelist? excepting the early Cable. And this in one of the most inspirational atmospheres in America. Sherwood Anderson, writing in a Southern magazine, says: "I proclaim New Orleans from my own angle, from the angle of the Modern. Perhaps the city will not thank me, but anyway it is a truly beautiful city. Perhaps if I can bring more artists here they will turn out a ragtag enough crew. Lafcadio Hearn wasn't such a desirable citizen while he lived in the 'Vieux Carré' . . . I am in New

Orleans and I am trying to proclaim something I have found here that I think America wants and needs.

"There is something left in this people here that makes them like one another, that leads to constant outbursts of the spirit of play, that keeps them from being too confoundedly serious about death and the ballot and reform and other less important things in life."

The nomenclature of Louisiana, too, tells its story. The place names of New Orleans, the names of the parishes, rivers, bayous, towns, plantations, evince an imagination not perceptible in less Latin sections of the country. The old Spanish and French Creoles, men of sentiment and invention, named their thoroughfares and their mansions with the same feeling as they did their sons and daughters. Instance some of the place names of New Orleans—Elysian Fields Street, Madmen Street, the Rue des Bons Enfants, Mystery Street, Music Street, the Rue d'Amour, Virtue Street, Pleasure Street. There are streets named for the nine muses; for the great poets, musicians, philosophers; oddly named streets such as Craps (which pastime, by the by, had its incipiency in New Orleans), Bagatelle, Tchoupitoulas, Prytania, Lotus, Ophir; streets after saints, battles, generals, heathen gods and goddesses—streets with *names* not numbers or commonplace associations!

And the nomenclature of the rivers and the beauty of these rivers—the dark glamor of the Tchefuncta, the misty languor of the Bogue Falaya, the Ouachita, the Atchafalaya, the Vermilion. . . . And the mysterious bayous—Goula, La Fourche, Teche, Barataria. . . . Here I pause. The uncanny remoteness, the quiet, the peace, the sort of primal witchery of this little "no man's water" just out of New Orleans stings the blood like Veuve Cliquot or malaria, as you will—poisons you into forgetfulness. And the parishes! (Not "county" as in all the other States.) Here are some: Acadia, Concordia, Tangipahoa, Avoyelles, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, Calcasieu, Plaquemines, Rapides, Natchitoches, and many others as odd and sonorous.

Some years ago New Orleans earned for herself the metronym, "Paris of America." As Louisiana has been dubbed the Pelican State, the Arm-chair State (not out of tenor with the whilom proverbial lassitude of its people), the Boot State, etcetera; so New Orleans has been termed the Crescent City, the Pageant City, etcetera; but "Paris of America" sticks and will so long as American "liberty" and that child-like, festive, emotional temper of its citizenry permit. We are, those of us who are acclimatized, an emotional love-loving people. Though we are not by one-third or one-fourth of French descent, we have nevertheless subconsciously taken on habit and attitude of the Continental.

Thus New Orleans supported a legalized tenderloin long after the custom was taboo everywhere else. The restaurants, cafés, and cabarets of "befo' de war" (the recentest fracas, of course) exhibited an atmosphere distinctly un-American in every respect. Garçons were garçons and not waiters. The proprietor, Madame or M'sieu, cooked the meal. Politeness itself was smiled upon. Men grew tipsy in a perfunctory sort of a way that annoyed no one, not even themselves. An evening at the cabaret followed the burlesque show or the opera and the local cabaret lights sometimes seemed to outdo the imported performers. "Storyville," so named in honor of Councilman Story who arranged the matter, bloomed, boomed, and wassailed. Even "the dollar women" smirking from their "cribs" seemed not unhappy—in the old days. Row upon row of them in bright colored shifts ogling, leering, wheedling: "Come in bébé . . . be a nice boy . . ." The larger "houses"—Arlington's Palace, Piazza's, Lulu's, and the rest—loomed disdainfully above these lesser fry. One pictured as he passed the great mirrored salons; the old "madam," white haired, powdered, spotless (in the laundry allusion), the paint-smeared, puffy-eyed girls, and the "professor." Tom Anderson's at the one corner, Toro's at the next, the Tuxedo a block in, and so on—in the old days. A filthy mess perhaps, a dunghill of disease and immorality, but have we entirely done

away with it? Driven it out? Can we? One wonders. Stamp it out in one place, it pushes up in another. Legislation is all very well and good, but legislation is—legislation.

What else? A state, viewed as the bird flies, very like any other State; fertile, well-tilled; combed with farms and factories; quick with gross, bustling, active humanity—typical one hundred per cent Americans, dulled by commerce and competition, deadened to romance and tradition, alive, apparently, but to covet and profit: hardy, stupid spawn, molelike, ferreting out existence. All of course according to one's slant. But what differentiates Louisiana, say, from Georgia? History, traditions, romance—the past.

Though Louisiana as a State to-day is very like any other State, New Orleans as a city to-day is very unlike any other city. For New Orleans, despite the recent ravages wrought by post-war propaganda, the Eighteenth Amendment, blue-sky laws, and modern office buildings, came through almost unscathed. Her identity, her individuality, her cap-and-bells quality seem as droll and native as ever. In fact, a sort of renaissance is now transpiring in her heart. The "old town" or French Quarter is being renovated, represerved to its former uniquity. Buildings toppling in ruins are being touched up much in the manner of Leonardo's "Last Supper" with sometimes, alas, like results. But the spirit remains, the old buoyant spirit of pristine times, and the Place d'Armes flanked by the Pontalba buildings, the Cabildo and Cathedral with its Presbytère, still remain to memorialize the Vieux Carré of the *ancien régime*.

Where in America will you find cheek by jowl examples of architecture that include the best traditions of the French Renaissance, the Spanish—Moorish and Colonial—as interpreted by a ship carpenter, and a pot-pourri of gaudy exotics, stemming from God knows what countries and eras? The rhythmic arts—music and the dance—have always had a home in this "Venice of the Gulf." The opera was here in 1796, before the birth of Chicago and San Francisco. And when New York had

but a paltry two hundred thousand population, Nouvelle-Orléans was a sophisticated city with cabarets, coffee houses, bathing parties, dueling bouts, gallantry, and sportsmanship. The horse race, "two forty on the shell road," originated on the old driveway past Metairie to Lake Pontchartrain.

If present-day Louisiana has any claim to an individuality, a color, a note of her own, it is lodged unmistakably in this sport-loving, sun-loving, unquenchable spirit which was and is New Orleans. Mistress of chivalry, cuisine, and the dance; cosmopolis of legend, caprice, and motley; the Columbine of the cities—New Orleans!

FEZ *

Philip Guedalla

(Philip Guedalla burst with meteoric brilliance upon the reading public in 1922, when he issued *The Second Empire.* In this history he described the career of Napoleon the third as a lingering anti-climax to the *coup d'état* which made him emperor. He was, evidently, as much interested in the personalities of history as in the facts, and more prone to discuss the human foibles and common weaknesses of men of eminence than to worship them as heroes. But the public had developed a taste for satire, and straightway began to compare his book with Lytton Strachey's life of Queen Victoria. Taking advantage of his popularity, Guedalla has since turned journalist, and has subjected many men now in the public eye to his cool scrutiny. In 1923 he collected a series of these short articles into a volume with the suggestive title, *Masters and Men;* and in the next year he brought forth *A Gallery* of them. His portraits of bishops and statesmen are often fragmentary and superficial. But his gift for a brilliant epigram has only been whetted by exercise.

In the last named volume Guedalla has furnished one notable example of well-sustained writing, the account of the sultan's entry into his city of Fez. Guedalla's description of this picturesque town in northern Africa has the delicacy and precision of a water-color. Little streams of sound float through the gorgeous colors of an oriental setting as the observer makes his way down into the city and waits for the procession to come into view. When it finally appears, however, it is amusing rather than impressive. To Guedalla's ironic gaze, it is more like a badly

* From *A Gallery.* G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1924.

produced operetta than the orient of our imagination. He is not without a natural delight in pageantry. But any tendency towards opulence of imagery in thinking or in writing about it has been successfully checked by the sophistication which Balliol College at Oxford can give a man when it builds upon a foundation laid at Rugby.)

FEZ

SOMEWHERE in the town a drum was throbbing. The little pulse of sound seemed to go straight up in the silence over the city, like a tall thread of wood smoke into a windless sky. But all round the great place lay out in the still sunshine; and the gray hills, where the olive-trees climb up into the Middle Atlas, looked down on Fez. There is something a little alarming about a city without a sound. When one stands above a town in the West, there is always a striking of clocks, a dull thunder of wheels, or the sudden yell of an engine. But down in the little streets, which wind through Fez, there is no traffic beyond men on foot and sheeted women and the faint click of ambling mules and little donkeys that brush their loads against the walls on either side. That is why scarcely a sound drifts up, as you look out across the city.

It is a gray, congested heap of square-topped houses, filling a whole valley, climbing the little hills, and huddled behind the shelter of the city walls. Tall towers stand up out of the mass, where the *muezzin* goes up between the city and the sky to quaver out the hours of prayer; and beyond the minarets one catches the sudden green of a great roof of tiles. But the memory that will remain is of a heaped, gray waste of houses lying silent in the sun. As one stared, it seemed to stare silently back; and somewhere in the town a solitary drum was throbbing.

The little alleys wind in and out among the houses. Sometimes they vanish into tunnels under the piled city, or pick their way across the chessboard shadows of a reed-roofed market. The blue sky comes suddenly round corners, and swarming streets end in the little hill-streams which pour through Fez. There is a

sound of rushing water everywhere in the city. It goes whispering under humped Moorish bridges and mutters like a stage conspirator in little strangled tunnels below the heaped gray houses. The great town had seemed so silent from the hills above. But down in the maze, where the veiled women slip discreetly by in the half-darkness of the streets, it is alive with little sounds. Whispering water, the slow lilt of men at work, snatches of high, wailing, minor plain-song (Spain learned its music at the knees of Africa), low chants from little schools, the tapping hammers of the coppersmiths, are all caught between the tall blind walls; and the hooded men crouch talking at every corner. The men and the water all talk low. Perhaps that is how Fez muttered ten years ago, before it came yelling down the little streets to murder stray, bewildered Frenchmen in the massacres. In Fez one can never quite forget that spring.

But one day the gray city made remarkable holiday. It shut up shop in the early afternoon and went pouring westward up the hill in its best kaleidoscopic clothes. The tide of traffic set steadily towards the Palace gates. Soldiers, great droves of women, elegant young gentlemen on mules, streamed up the little alleys, as tall negroes went elbowing through the press; and solemn citizens, who lie all day in little cupboards three feet square to sell a pinch of green tea for a copper and an hour's conversation, abandoned the excitements of commerce for the keener joys of spectacle. His Shereefian Majesty was on the road from Rabat; and was it not fitting that his city of Fez should receive the Sultan at the gates? From the great square before the Palace there was a steady roar, and the gorged streets still poured late-comers into the mass. They stood and pushed and shouted; and sometimes, discarding all false dignity, they swept through the crowd, fifteen abreast, arms linked, knees up, and singing to the steady thunder of their little earthenware drums. Above and behind them were the gates whose great square battlements had so alarmed the romantic imagination of M. Pierre Loti; and somewhere in the middle loud arguments

and a faint gleam of bayonets indicated that anxious French officers still hoped to keep a road open for the procession.

Royalty was late. But Fez resorted freely to the consolations of song and dance. Rings formed in the crowd; and the little drums throbbed without ceasing, as indomitable loyalists jigged steadily up and down in line, and hillmen in circles sang interminable choruses. Then a gun spoke from the green fort beyond the town, and the heads all turned to the roadway between the bayonets.

There was something odd about that procession from the first. It opened with four closed cars, which glided in perfect silence and with drawn blinds up to the Palace. There was a roguish intimation that these contained a selection of the Imperial harem; and we gathered from the small number that Majesty was making only a short stay in Fez. Followed four open cabs, containing (one heard it with a mild thrill) the Keepers of the Door, come straight from the Arabian Nights to guard the Sultan's harem. The misleading art of Ballet had taught one to believe that these figures of romance would wear a vivacious, almost a festal air; and to the heated Western imagination those four cab-loads of dejected men in pointed red fezzes were a bitter blow. The Sultan of Morocco seemed to have neglected the opportunities afforded to him by M. Bakst. Eunuchs in cabs. . . . One waited gloomily to see a station-omnibus full of mutes with bow-strings. But the salutes were still thudding from the battery on the hill, and the infantry in the road sprang suddenly to the "Present." There was a clatter of horses under the great gates; and a stream of men in white went riding by with long five-foot flint-locks from the Sûs, sitting the great colored saddles stiffly with feet driven well home into their square stirrups.

Then the colors changed, and negro lancers jingled past in red. Pennons, black faces, scarlet tunics took the procession to the border-line of opera. There was a pause; and a band launched into the ceremonial discords that are reserved for royal ears. The crowd was roaring in the square; and when it paused

for breath, the shrill *you-you-you*, which squeals for victory or drives men on to kill, came from the women in their corner. The French guns spoke slowly from the battery; and down in the road, at the center of the din, a grave bundle of white linen moved deliberately through the noise and watched with unseeing eyes the prostrations of anxious Kaids. For the Sultan had come into his city of Fez.

THE RHYTHM OF LIFE*

ALICE MEYNELL

(The title of Mrs. Meynell's essay is easy to understand. Evidences that life has its rhythms are so personal as to be apparent to all of us. Our blood leaps in response to the heart's contracting, and then waits sluggishly for the next impulsion. We throw a stone into the water and watch the recurrent circles expand. We put our ear against a shell and listen to its throbbing measure. But these examples are too superficial for Mrs. Meynell. She finds a rhythm also in the natural alternation of work and rest, of speech and silence, and in the delights of life that are compensations to her as they were to Emerson for its inevitable disappointments.

Such illustrations of the rhythm of life are by no means elementary. To understand them demands the communion of the thoughtful mind with a lifetime of experience, and some knowledge also of the way in which the mind of the mystic penetrates to the soul of man and the center of life that it may find them pulsating with the spiritual presence of God. And so, unless we read her essay carefully, the rhythm of its own logic may escape us. We shall be repaid by a re-reading; and if we do so, we shall find the development of her essay more logical than the writings of that earlier mystic, S. Thomas à Kempis, whom she quotes with affection. For every sentence brings us a new illustration of her theme and leads us nearer to the heart of it.

Alice Thompson was among those whom the movement instituted by Cardinal Newman brought into the Church of Rome.

* From *Essays*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913.

As this essay would lead us to expect, the Catholic faith appealed to her not simply because it has a foundation in mysticism, but also because its mysticism has been developed into a logical system of philosophy. In 1877 she married one of the leading Catholic men of letters in England, Wilfred Meynell. She counted Dickens, Browning, Ruskin, and Rossetti among her friends. And, like Rossetti's sister Christina, she is known chiefly for her religious lyrics. Her absorption in religion gave her a serene and noble conception of life which was humanized by her devotion also to the more terrestrial beauty of art and literature.)

THE RHYTHM OF LIFE

If life is not always poetical, it is at least metrical. Periodicity rules over the mental experience of man, according to the path of the orbit of his thoughts. Distances are not gaged, ellipses not measured, velocities not ascertained, times not known. Nevertheless, the recurrence is sure. What the mind suffered last week, or last year, it does not suffer now; but will suffer again next week or next year. Happiness is not a matter of events; it depends upon the tides of the mind. Disease is metrical, closing in at shorter and shorter periods towards death, sweeping abroad at longer and longer intervals towards recovery. Sorrow for one cause was intolerable yesterday, and will be intolerable to-morrow; to-day it is easy to bear, but the cause has not passed. Even the burden of a spiritual distress unsolved is bound to leave the heart to a temporary peace; and remorse itself does not remain—it returns. Gaiety takes us by a dear surprise. If we had made a course of notes of its visits, we might have been on the watch, and would have had an expectation instead of a discovery. No one makes such observations; in all the diaries of students of the interior world, there have never come to light the records of the Kepler of such cycles. But Thomas à Kempis knew of the recurrences, if he did not measure them. In his cell alone with the elements—"What wouldst thou more than these? for out of these were all things made"—he learned the stay to be found in the depth of the hours of bitterness, and the remembrance that restrains the soul at the coming of the moment of delight, giving it a more conscious welcome, but presaging for it an inexorable flight. And "rarely, rarely comest thou," sighed Shelley, not to Delight merely, but

to the Spirit of Delight. Delight can be compelled beforehand, called, and constrained to our service—Ariel can be bound to a daily task; but such artificial violence throws life out of meter, and it is not the spirit that is thus compelled. *That* flits upon an orbit elliptically or parabolically or hyperbolically curved, keeping no man knows what trysts with Time.

It seems fit that Shelley and the author of the "Imitation" should both have been keen and simple enough to perceive these flights, and to guess at the order of this periodicity. Both souls were in close touch with the spirits of their several worlds, and no deliberate human rules, no infractions of the liberty and law of the universal movement, kept from them the knowledge of recurrences. *Eppur si muove.* They knew that presence does not exist without absence; they knew that what is just upon its flight of farewell is already on its long path of return. They knew that what is approaching to the very touch is hastening towards departure. "O winds," cried Shelley, in autumn,

O wind,
If winter comes can spring be far behind?

They knew that the flux is equal to the reflux; that to interrupt with lawful recurrences, out of time, is to weaken the impulse of onset and retreat; the sweep and impetus of movement. To live in constant efforts after an equal life, whether the equality be sought in mental production, or in spiritual sweetness, or in the joy of the senses, is to live without either rest or full activity. The souls of certain of the saints, being singularly simple and single, have been in the most complete subjection to the law of periodicity. Ecstasy and desolation visited them by seasons. They endured, during spaces of vacant time, the interior loss of all for which they had sacrificed the world. They rejoiced in the uncovenanted beatitude of sweetness alighting in their hearts. Like them are the poets whom, three times or ten times in the course of a long life, the Muse has approached, touched, and forsaken. And yet hardly like them; not always so docile,

nor so wholly prepared for the departure, the brevity, of the golden and irrevocable hour. Few poets have fully recognized the metrical absence of their Muse. For full recognition is expressed in one only way—silence.

It has been found that several tribes in Africa and in America worship the moon, and not the sun; a great number worship both; but no tribes are known to adore the sun, and not the moon. On her depend the tides; and she is Selene, mother of Herse, bringer of the dews that recurrently irrigate lands where rain is rare. More than any other companion of earth is she the Measurer. Early Indo-Germanic languages knew her by that name. Her metrical phases are the symbol of the order of recurrence. Constancy in approach and in departure is the reason of her inconstancies. Juliet will not receive a vow spoken in invocation of the moon; but Juliet did not live to know that love itself has tidal times—lapses and ebbs which are due to the metrical rule of the interior heart, but which the lover vainly and unkindly attributes to some outward alteration in the beloved. For man—except those elect already named—is hardly aware of periodicity. The individual man either never learns it fully, or learns it late. And he learns it so late, because it is a matter of cumulative experience upon which cumulative evidence is long lacking. It is in the after-part of each life that the law is learned so definitely as to do away with the hope or fear of continuance. That young sorrow comes so near to despair is a result of this young ignorance. So is the early hope of great achievement. Life seems so long, and its capacity so great, to one who knows nothing of all the intervals it needs must hold—intervals between aspirations, between actions, pauses as inevitable as the pauses of sleep. And life looks impossible to the young unfortunate, unaware of the inevitable and unfailing refreshment. It would be for their peace to learn that there is a tide in the affairs of men, in a sense more subtle—if it is not too audacious to add a meaning to Shakespeare—than the phrase was meant to contain. Their joy is flying away from them on its way home; their life will

wax and wane; and if they would be wise, they must wake and rest in its phases, knowing that they are ruled by the law that commands all things—a sun's revolutions and the rhythmic pangs of maternity.

SUMMER *

MAURICE HEWLETT

(Here is an essay in marked contrast to those that have preceded. It is not sophisticated and ironical like Philip Guedalla's, nor sophisticated and æsthetic like Vernon Lee's, nor learned and mystical like Mrs. Meynell's. Instead, its tone is romantic and whimsical. Before his recent death, its author was, in fact, one of the few English men of letters who were writing romances with a picturesque historical setting. His novels were laid in the Middle Ages, in the Renaissance, in Italy of the eighteenth century, in Scandinavia, in England, and in Scotland. But whatever might be their setting, like certain recent mural paintings of an archaic flavor, they were all picturesque with woodlands and green meadows and twittering birds; they were populated by good-natured heroes and damsels bewitchingly perverse.

These qualities of his novels are carried over into Hewlett's essays. With a good-natured perversity (quite unlike the close logical development in most of the essays that precede), he chooses summer for his subject, and then tells us it is not his favorite season. But, characteristically, there is much about the season he does like, and when he happens to recall a disagreeable feature, he forthwith digresses into an appreciative description of its agreeable counterpart in some other season. So too, he begins his essay in the country regions of the south of England, but he rambles amiably into Scotland and into Scandinavia, and to the seashore, which his father disliked and visited annually. This

* From *Last Essays* Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924.

good-humored narrative is an excellent example of the intimate essay in which the author's personal contact with his reader and his subject justifies his license in following the garrulous and illogical manner of conversation.)

SUMMER

If, like me, you are more interested in seeing things happen than in seeing them when they have happened, you will not be such an advocate of Summer as of other, any other, seasons. For summer is the one time of year when practically nothing happens outdoors. From about the middle of May—I speak of the south parts—to the middle of September Nature sits with her hands in her lap and a pleasantly tired face. There, my children, she says, I have done my job. I hope you like it. Most of us, I own, do like it very much, and signify the same in the usual manner by vigorous ball-exercise and liquid refreshment, much of it of an explosive and delusive kind. When the Summer is over, somewhere round about Michaelmas day, Nature rolls up her sleeves and begins again. Properly speaking, there are only two seasons—Spring and Summer. The people therefore who, like me, prefer the Spring to the Summer, have more time in which to exhibit or dissemble their love—and a good deal of it, I confess, uncommonly beastly in the matter of weather.

The people who like everything are the people to envy. Children, for example, love the Winter just as much as the Summer. They whistle as they jump their feet, or flack their arms across their bodies; and whistling is one of the sure signs of contented youth. I remember that we used to think it rare sport to find the sponge a solid globe of ice, or to be able to get off cleaning our teeth on the ground that the tooth water was frozen in the bottle. I don't believe I ever had cold feet in bed, and am sure that if I did I had something much more exciting to think about. There might be skating to-morrow, or we could finish the snowman, or go tobogganning with the tea-tray; or it was Christmas; or we were going to the pantomime. All seasons were alike to

us; each had its delights. That of Summer, undoubtedly, was going to the seaside. We always had a month of that, and then a month in some country place or other which my father did not know. That was done for his sake, because the seaside bored him so much that even his children noticed it. It was nothing to us, of course, as we lived in the country, and did not, as he did, poor man, spend most days of the year in London; but equally of course we weren't bored. I never heard of a child being bored, and can imagine few things more tragic in a small way. No: it was always interesting to live in some one else's house, learn something of their ways, chance upon a family photograph, or a discarded toy, or a dog's grave in the shrubbery; or to read their books and guess what bits they had liked—any little things like that. And, of course, it was comfortable to know that one's father wasn't always smothering a gape, or trying to escape from nigger-minstrels. As for the sea—a very different thing from the seaside—I don't believe he ever looked at it. I am certain that I never saw him on the sands. The sands are no place for you unless you had rather be barefoot than not. Now, it is a fact that I never saw my father's feet.

At the same time, I don't know where else one could be in August, except at the seaside. Really, there is very little to say for the country in that month. The trees are as near black as makes no matter, the hills are dust-color, the rivers are running dry. True, the harvest is going on; but the harvest is not what it used to be. You had, indeed, "A field full of folk" (in old Langland's words) in former days. All hands were at it, and the women following the men, building the hiles, as we call them, and the children beside them, twisting up the straw ties as fast as they could twist. And then the bread and cheese and cider—or it might be home-brewed beer—in the shade! But bless me—last year I saw the harvesting of a hundred acre field—our fields run very big down here; and the whole thing was being done by one man on a machine! The Solitary Reaper, forsooth! The man was reaper, tyer and binder all in one; you never saw

so desolate a spectacle. So the harvest is not what it was. It may have attractions for the farmer, but for nobody else that I can think of. Go north for your Summer and you may do better. August is wet, generally, in Scotland, but when you are in Scotland you won't mind rain, or had better not. You can catch trout in the rain in Scotland, and with a fly too: that is the extraordinary part of it. And the Scottish summer twilights are things to remember. They are overdone in Norway, where they go on all night; where the sun may go behind the hill for five minutes and begin the day before you have thought of going to bed. You can't keep that up—but it is exciting enough at first. The great charm of the Norwegian Summer to me is that it includes what we call Spring. The other season in that country is Winter, which begins in September and ends with May. Then, immediately Summer begins: the grass grows and is ready for the scythe, the cherries flower and get ripe and are eaten—all at once. You get those amazing contrasts there which you only have in mountainous countries; which I remember most vividly crossing the Cevennes from Le Puy to Alais. On the watershed I was picking daffodils, only just ready to be picked; in the valley of the Ardeche they were making hay, and roses were dusty in the hedges. I slid from March into June—in twenty minutes. You will not be so piqued in England; yet if your taste lies in the way of strawberries for instance, you can do pretty work even in England. You can begin in Cornwall, or Scilly, and have your first dish in early May, or late April, with clotted cream, of course. Then you can eat your way through the western shires to Hampshire, and make yourself very ill somewhere about Fareham, in June. When you are able to stand the journey, you can go on to the Fens and find them ready for you in early July. In August you will find them at their best in Cumberland, and in October, weather permitting, you will have them on your table in Scotland. After that, if you are alive, and really care for strawberries, you must leave this kingdom, and perhaps go to California. I don't know.

The Summer will give you better berries than the strawberry, in my opinion. It will give you the *wild* strawberry, which, if you can find somebody to pick them for you, and then eat them with sugar and white wine, is a dish for Olympians, ambrosial food. Then there is the bilberry, which wants cream and a great deal of tooth-brush afterwards, and the blaeberry, which grows in Cumberland above the 2,000 foot mark, just where the Stagshorn moss begins; and the wild raspberry which here is found on the tops of the hills, and in Scotland at the bottoms. I declare the wild raspberry to be one of the most delicious fruits God Almighty ever made. In Norway you will have the cranberry and the saeter-berry; but in Norway you will want nothing so long as there are cherries. I know Kent very well—but its cherries are not so good as those of Norway.

I had no intention, when I began, to talk about eating all the time. It is a bad sign when one begins that, though as a matter of fact we do think a great deal of our food in the country—because we are hungry, and it is so awfully good; and (as I dare say the Londoner thinks) because we have nothing else to think about. That is a mistake, and the Summer is the time to correct it, by spending it in the country and trying to understand us. Let me be bold enough to suggest to the Londoner who takes the prime of Summer to learn the ways of the country in it, that he would prove a more teachable disciple if he did not bring his own ways with him. He is rather apt to do that. He expects, for example, his golf, and always has his toys with him for the purpose. Well, he should not. Golf is a suburban game, handy for the townsman in his off hours. Country people don't play golf. They have too much to do. The charabanc is another town-institution, to be used like a stage-coach. Nothing of the country can be learned by streaming over moor and mountain in one of them. The Oreads hide from them; Pan and old Sylvanus treat them as natural process, scourges to be endured, like snow-storms or foot-and-mouth disease. The country is veiled from

charabancs, partly in dust, partly in disgust. For we don't understand hunting in gangs. The herd-instinct which such things involve and imply is not a country instinct. We are self-sufficient here, still, in spite of all invitation, individuals.

ON AN UNKNOWN COUNTRY*

Hilaire Belloc

(This beautifully written essay, like Mrs. Meynell's, is the product of a Catholic and a mystical mind. Hilaire Belloc is an Englishman of French descent, educated at Edgbaston Oratory school and at Balliol College, Oxford. His literary career started in the mid-nineties with the publication of several volumes of poetry, especially verses for children. But Belloc has shown unusual diversity of talent, and in the public mind he is now best known as the somewhat militant champion of the Roman Church and the continuator of Lingard's Catholic History of England. He uses the essay as a convenient receptacle for tucking away all sorts of ideas that occur to him in the course of more arduous studies. Like Montaigne's, his essays, as the titles of their collections suggest (*On Nothing*, 1907; *On Everything*, 1909; *On Anything*, 1910; *On*, 1924), are for the most part wilfully lacking in form. Yet the example here quoted proves to be an exception.

Belloc has chosen for this essay a difficult subject, one that, after the most careful development, often eludes our comprehension. But it is a theme that has attracted some of the finest minds in many ages and many countries, and rests at the foundation of most of the great religions of the world. " . . . there is an Unknown Country lying beneath the places that we know, and appearing only in moments of revelation." What this country is may become more clear if we say it is the abode of "the eternal verities." It is the haven the Jewish prophets sought in the world to come. It is the mystical union with God of which

* From *On Nothing*. London: Methuen & Co., 1907.

the Neoplatonic philosophers wrote. It is the reward of meditation for the Hindu saint. It is the wisdom and the peace of mind which the young man of this essay searched the bookstalls to find in the descriptions of ideal forms of government.

But it is also the goal of the romantic poets. Shelley in his *Epipsychidion* was in quest of it. Belloc tells us, in what is only in appearance a digression, that the best of poetry will bring us there. So Coleridge believed; and Arnold with his theory of those poetic lines that serve as "touch-stones." There are, he said, certain elevated passages of poetry which reveal whole vistas of comprehension with intense conviction. Those who read them feel that they have mounted a plateau, whence the familiar valleys of every-day experience appear in the new perspective transformed into a country hitherto unknown to them. And this is the Unknown Country.)

ON AN UNKNOWN COUNTRY

TEN years ago, I think, or perhaps a little less or perhaps a little more, I came in the Euston Road—that thoroughfare of Empire—upon a young man a little younger than myself whom I knew, though I did not know him very well. It was drizzling and the second-hand booksellers (who are rare in this thoroughfare) were beginning to put out the waterproof covers over their wares. This disturbed my acquaintance, because he was engaged upon buying a cheap book that should really satisfy him.

Now this was difficult, for he had no hobby, and the book which should satisfy him must be one that should describe or summon up, or, it is better to say, hint at—or, the theologians would say, reveal, or the Platonists would say *recall*—the Unknown Country, which he thought was his very home.

I had known his habit of seeking such books for two years, and had half wondered at it and half sympathized. It was an appetite partly satisfied by almost any work that brought to him the vision of a place in the mind which he had always intensely desired, but to which, as he had then long guessed, and as he is now quite certain, no human paths directly lead. He would buy with avidity travels to the moon and to the planets, from the most worthless to the best. He loved Utopias and did not disregard even so prosaic a category as books of real travel, so long as by exaggeration or by a glamour in the style they gave him a full draught of that drug which he desired. Whether this satisfaction the young man sought was a satisfaction in illusion (I have used the word "drug" with hesitation), or whether it was, as he persistently maintained, the satisfaction of a memory, or whether it was, as I am often tempted to think, the satisfaction of a thirst which will ultimately be quenched in

every human soul I cannot tell. Whatever it was, he sought it with more than the appetite with which a hungry man seeks food. He sought it with something that was not hunger but passion.

That evening he found a book.

It is well known that men purchase with difficulty second-hand books upon the stalls, and that in some mysterious way the sellers of these books are content to provide a kind of library for the poorer and more eager of the public, and a library admirable in this, that it is accessible upon every shelf and exposes a man to no control, except that he must not steal, and even in this it is nothing but the force of public law that interferes. My friend therefore would in the natural course of things have dipped into the book and left it there; but a better luck persuaded him. Whether it was the beginning of the rain or a sudden loneliness in such terrible weather and in such a terrible town, compelling him to seek a more permanent companionship with another mind, or whether it was my sudden arrival and shame lest his poverty should appear in his refusing to buy the book—whatever it was, he bought that same. And since he bought the Book I also have known it and have found in it, as he did, the most complete expression that I know of the Unknown Country, of which he was a citizen—oddly a citizen, as I then thought, wisely as I now conceive.

All that can best be expressed in words should be expressed in verse, but verse is a slow thing to create; nay, it is not really created: it is a secretion of the mind, it is a pearl that gathers round some irritant and slowly expresses the very essence of beauty and of desire that has lain long, potential and unexpressed, in the mind of the man who secretes it. God knows that this Unknown Country has been hit off in verse a hundred times. If I were perfectly sure of my accents I would quote two lines from the *Odyssey* in which the Unknown Country stands out as clear as does a sudden vision from a mountain ridge when the mist lifts after a long climb and one sees beneath

one an unexpected and glorious land; such a vision as greets a man when he comes over the Saldeu into the simple and secluded Republic of the Andorrans. Then, again, the Germans in their idioms have flashed it out, I am assured, for I remember a woman telling me that there was a song by Schiller which exactly gave the revelation of which I speak. In English, thank Heaven, emotion of this kind, emotion necessary to the life of the soul, is very abundantly furnished. As, who does not know the lines:

> Blessed with that which is not in the word
> Of man nor his conception: Blessed Land!

Then there is also the whole group of glimpses which Shakespeare amused himself by scattering as might a man who had a great oak chest full of jewels and who now and then, out of kindly fun, poured out a handful and gave them to his guests. I quote from memory, but I think certain of the lines run more or less like this:

> Look how the dawn in russet mantle clad
> Stands on the steep of yon high eastern hill.

And again:

> Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
> Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.

Which moves me to digress. . . . How on earth did any living man pull it off as well as that? I remember arguing with a man who very genuinely thought the talent of Shakespeare was exaggerated in public opinion, and discovering at the end of a long wrangle that he was not considering Shakespeare as a poet. But as a poet, then, how on earth did he manage it?

Keats did it continually, especially in the *Hyperion.* Milton does it so well in the Fourth Book of *Paradise Lost* that I defy any man of a sane understanding to read the whole of that book before going to bed and not to wake up next morning as though he had been on a journey. William Morris does it, especially in

the verses about a prayer over the corn; and as for Virgil, the poet Virgil, he does it continually like a man whose very trade it is. Who does not remember the swimmer who saw Italy from the top of the wave?

Here also let me digress. How do the poets do it? (I do not mean where do they get their power, as I was asking just now of Shakespeare, but how do the words, simple or complex, produce that effect?) Very often there is not any adjective, sometimes not any qualification at all: often only one subject with its predicate and its statement and its object. There is never any detail of description, but the scene rises, more vivid in color, more exact in outline, more wonderful in influence, than anything we can see with our eyes, except perhaps those things we see in the few moments of intense emotion which come to us, we know not whence, and expand out into completion and into manhood.

Catullus does it. He does it so powerfully in the opening lines of

Vesper adest . . .

that a man reads the first couplet of that Hymeneal, and immediately perceives the Apennines.

The nameless translator of the Highland song does it, especially when he advances that battering line:

And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

They all do it, bless their hearts, the poets, which leads me back again to the mournful reflection that it cannot be done in prose. . . .

Little friends, my readers, I wish it could be done in prose, for if it could, and if I knew how to do it, I would here present to you that Unknown Country in such a fashion that every landscape which you should see henceforth could be transformed, by the appearing through it, the shining and uplifting through it, of the Unknown Country upon which reposes this tedious and repetitive world.

Now you may say to me that prose can do it, and you may quote to me the end of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, a very remarkable piece of writing. Or, better still, as we shall be more agreed upon it, the general impression left upon the mind by the book which set me writing—Mr. Hudson's *Crystal Age*. I do not deny that prose can do it, but when it does do it, it is hardly to be called prose, for it is inspired. Note carefully the passages in which the trick is worked in prose (for instance, in the story of Ruth in the Bible, where it is done with complete success), you will perceive an incantation and a spell. Indeed this same episode of Ruth in exile has inspired two splendid passages of European verse, of which it is difficult to say which is the more national, and therefore the greatest, Victor Hugo's in the *Légende des Siècles* or Keats's astounding four lines.

. . . . . .

There was a shepherd the other day up at Findon Fair who had come from the east by Lewes with sheep, and who had in his eyes that reminiscence of horizons which makes the eyes of shepherds and of mountaineers different from the eyes of other men. He was occupied when I came upon him in pulling Mr. Fulton's sheep by one hind leg so that they should go the way they were desired to go. It happened that day that Mr. Fulton's sheep were not sold, and the shepherd went driving them back through Findon Village, and up on to the high Downs. I went with him to hear what he had to say, for shepherds talk quite differently from other men. And when we came on to the shoulder of Chanctonbury and looked down upon the Weald, which stretched out like the Plains of Heaven, he said to me: "I never come here but it seems like a different place down below, and as though it were not the place where I have gone afoot with sheep under the hills. It seems different when you are looking down at it." He added that he had never known why. Then I knew that he, like myself, was perpetually in perception of the Unknown Country, and I was very pleased. But we did not say anything more to each other about it until we got

down into Steyning. There we drank together and we still said nothing more about it, so that to this day all we know of the matter is what we knew when we started, and what you knew when I began to write this, and what you are now no further informed upon, namely, that there is an Unknown Country lying beneath the places that we know, and appearing only in moments of revelation.

Whether we shall reach this country at last or whether we shall not, it is impossible to determine.

IDEALS AND DAY-DREAMS*

KENNETH GRAHAME

(Kenneth Grahame was born in Edinburgh in 1859. At somewhat rare intervals books have come from his pen that have given him a high place in the esteem of those who admire delicacy and charm in writing and who have not forgotten their childhood. Though *The Golden Age, Dream Days,* and *The Wind in the Willows,* which appeared at intervals between 1895 and 1908, are more than reminiscent of childhood, they probably appeal more to grown-ups than to children. They do not make light of the concerns of childhood, in the manner of *Penrod* and *Seventeen,* but accept the point of view of youth and deal with it sympathetically. The child is father of the man and man always retains in his make-up something of the child.

In the essay here included the author further reveals his ability to interpret childhood. What are the dreams of a child and what becomes of them when he grows up? Are these day-dreams beneficial in stimulating him to achievement, or do they merely clog the mind and keep it from being occupied with the task at hand? From this starting point the essayist gracefully and naturally proceeds to topics that are commonly regarded as being more important: the ideals of adults and the relation between dreams and the practical side of life. Questions arise. Do men ever lay aside their habit of day-dreaming? Is it better to have ideals too high to be attainable, or a more practical and attainable idealism, as we are told the Greeks had? We cannot do better than quote from the essay in question. "Surely it is by seeing things better than they are that one arrives at making

* From *The Yale Review,* January, 1923.

them better. This indeed is what 'vision' means, and one knows that 'without vision the people perish.' Not—stay as they are; not even—go backwards. But—perish, from the anemia of no ideals.")

IDEALS AND DAY-DREAMS

Among the various instincts which govern this poor human nature of ours, in its affairs of social converse, I suppose one of the very strongest is the passion—for in some cases it really amounts to a passion—for imparting information to other people.

So very violent is this morbid craving, so universal, so unsparing of either age or sex, whether of the imparter or the impartee, that it is difficult to say what might not become of a world in which it should succeed in obtaining the mastery—what attempts at mutual extinction, what bloodshed, might not eventually ensue. Fortunately the race is gifted with another powerful instinct, another passion almost equally overmastering—the sullen dislike we all feel for being fed with facts, our dogged determination not to be made the vessels for their storage, the demand we all automatically make that they shall be instantly taken away and dumped—if they *must* be dumped—on somebody else.

This instinctive repulsion of ours seems to apply, strangely enough, to facts alone, to the things that really are and that really matter, and not at all to the things that really aren't and that really don't matter. For it is undeniable that we will listen long and listen gladly to any quantity of fiction—and not necessarily first-class fiction either. Poetry, too, we can stand—at least some of us—to almost any extent; and neither poetry nor fiction need be new and unfamiliar. Indeed, we have usually a special welcome for old friends. The one thing we do not want, apparently, is truth—truth in the guise of solid facts and figures. Almost any fiction will do, so long as it is really fiction. To speak out quite honestly, we like jolly lies and plenty of them.

Many thoughtful persons have doubtless ere now noticed,

and perhaps deplored, the existence of these two rival passions; and philosophers will have recognized that the second of these—the revolt against information—is, after all, merely one of those sound instincts by which the human race defends itself against possible extermination—that it is a sort of moral phagocyte. For our present purposes, however, it will suffice if we content ourselves with the simple reason, that we dislike facts so much because they insist on taking up the place and the time of other things that we like better.

This aversion from the acquiring of exact information is most glaringly evident in the case of the very young; but perhaps this is only because it is on their hapless heads that the information-hose discharges its stream with the greatest force, directness, and continuity, and because they are weak and defenseless, and also less skilled and subtle than we are in evading it. Children as such, indeed, do not reject the acquiring of facts as such, in anything like the same degree as we fact-weary ones of larger growth—as any of us well knows who has been cornered suddenly by some child of seven who has acquired a mastery of, let us say, All the Flags of All the Nations, and insists on telling us them. As a matter of fact, children are far more patient, far more receptive, than we, under the sousing, pitiless hose of information. Indeed, curiosity being the main motive-power of a child's mind, the passionate need for knowing the how and the why of everything will often drive him to acquire laboriously such a mass of facts on one subject or another as should put us elders to shame—and frequently does. No, the child has no such strong distaste as we others have for information in itself, but there are moments when even he rebels; and the reason for his attitude must be sought elsewhere.

I suppose that the most obtuse, the most conventional of schoolmasters, finding Smith Minor's receptive faculties tightly closed against information on the subject of, say, Greek grammar, is not such a fool as to suppose either that he is wilfully obdurate (which is indeed unlikely, Smith being quite ignorant

of the subject and therefore without prejudice or prepossessions, for or against) or that Smith's mind is an empty chamber, free of all furnishing, the door of which merely sticks and refuses to open. No, he knows his Smith too well for that. The trouble to the master is, that he knows Smith's mind to be fully occupied already. As he puts it himself, the boy, just when he ought to be attending, is always thinking of something else.

That, M'lud, is my client's case. Smith is thinking about something else. And about something far rarer and braver, we may be quite sure, than even the most irregular of verbs.

Of course Smith's mind may be unworthily occupied—with cricket averages, for instance; but this is not so usual as is commonly supposed. Away from the actual games themselves, a boy's mind is by no means so taken up with them as some of his depictors would have us believe. What, then, *is* he thinking about?

We may adopt the Socratic method of inquiry, and begin by asking ourselves what he is *not* thinking about. Well, of course he is not thinking about his work; we have agreed as to that already. Nor is he thinking about his unhappy distaste for work, his consequent place in his form, and whether the governor will jaw him and make him swot during the holidays; for these would be obvious thoughts, and dear Smith never wastes the precious hours of class-time in thinking of the obvious. Neither —when we proceed to judge him by our baser selves—is he likely to be thinking about women, for instance, their merits and demerits; because he knows nothing whatever about them, and, what's more, he doesn't want to. For the same excellent and sufficing reason, he is not thinking about the various methods, honest and otherwise, of making money. No; in place of occupying itself with all these things that seem so natural to us, his mind is up and away, in a far, far better world than this, a world wherein matters are conducted as they should be, and where he is undoubtedly the best man there and is being given a fair chance at last. He is, in fact, pursuing his ideals, and his mind

is fully occupied with them. If the real had anything half so fine to offer him, the real would doubtless get its chance with him; but, as we all know, it hasn't.

But now I seem to hear the objection that I have deceived you, that I have let you down. At the mention of ideals, you looked for me to trace and follow some of those rare and passionate visions which have taken our great ones by the hand and led them from crag to crag, from height on to further height, till they have reached Olympus itself and brought back to level earth some of its sacred fire. And instead of this I am offering you, it would seem, the wayward, self-indulgent day-dreams of an unconcentrated, purposeless boy—dreams he will grow out of or will shake off when the time for action is at hand—dreams which are of no help to his self-development, but a real hindrance. Ah, but can we, dare we, attempt to draw a strict dividing line between the wayward dream and the high purposeful ideal, to pronounce exactly where one leaves off and the other begins? Is it not indeed of the essence of both, that we are carried away by them into an intenser, finer, clearer atmosphere than this earth can possibly offer? Most of such visions, it is true, come to nothing; only a very, very few achieve actual concrete results. But this is only because actual artists, shapers, makers, are scarce, while dreamers are many. It is no disparagement of the dreams themselves that only a very few of the dreamers have the power, or rather the gift, to harness their dreams with mastery and bend them to their imperious will.

And when we are tempted to speak somewhat contemptuously of the wayward fancies of a boy, let us ask ourselves seriously whether we ever entirely lay aside this habit of mind; whether we do not all of us, to the last, take refuge at times from the rubs and disappointments of a life where things go eternally askew, in our imaginary world where at any rate we have things for the time exactly as we want them? I hope to succeed in showing that this is really so—that in each and all of us the

real and ideal planes, so to speak, are coexisting and functioning constantly side by side.

In childhood, the simplest and most usual form of ideal may be described as an image projected by the young mind on a sort of white screen of its own—the image of some*thing*, some*body*, or some*where*, which, on the one hand, it knows doesn't and can't exist, something frankly impossible to realize, and which it is therefore free to make as wilfully fantastic as it pleases; or which, on the other hand, may be some thing, place, or person shortly to be seen, and of which it would fain construct a simulacrum beforehand. Of this latter class of ideals, two things may with certainty be predicted—that they will be fantastically unlike the reality when it arrives, and that they will almost certainly be far finer, nobler, and better; that is because they are ideals.

Let us take the very simplest case we can think of—the case, let us say, of an inland-bred child who is told that next week he is going to the sea. That child does not say to himself, "Very well; next week and not before, I shall know all about it, about this mysterious wonder, this thing of such divine possibilities. Till next week, therefore, my mind must remain a blank on the subject, my judgment must be entirely suspended." No, he forthwith proceeds, every minute of the intervening days and almost every minute of the nights, to project on his mental screen images of all he fondly hopes the sea to be, of all the strange new delights he dreams of finding there—all wildly fantastic, all utterly unlike the real thing, and all of course far more beautiful and bewitching than any actual sea-coast that ever was foaled. That is why so many children appear to be disappointed at their first sight of the sea. "Is this *all*?" they say. You see, there was so very much more on their screen!

Or take another equally simple case—the expected arrival of some hitherto unseen relation—let us say a grandmother. Again the child does not say to itself, "All right, when grandmother actually comes along, and not before, it will be time

to size her up. Probably she will be a fair to average grandmother. It doesn't do to expect too much in these days. At any rate, I must just wait and see." No, emphatically. On the mental screen is immediately thrown a fairy grandmother, unfairly and unnaturally gifted and shaped. That is why some children appear to be disappointed at first sight of their grandmothers. For the consolation of any grandmothers who may have been hurt by some such cool reception, may I remind them that their only rivals were their ideal selves, and that in such a contest it is surely no shame to be worsted?

Of course the fantastic quality of these mental screen pictures that I am insisting on may be more or less so, according to the amount of information the child may already possess on the subject, either from oral information or from reading. There is a good instance of this in that very popular book of two or three years ago—*The Young Visiters*. The child-author had evidently never been to London herself, but must have heard a good deal about it from others, from time to time. Much of this she probably forgot, but certain things, certain salient things, naturally stuck in her memory. Accordingly, the London that her heroine reaches is mainly a compound of the Crystal Palace and the private apartments at Hampton Court, lightly tricked out with a hotel, a hansom-cab, and a policeman. It is an ideal London, of course—does it not include unlimited strawberry ices and a Prince of W——, always accessible to persons of very low extraction? And yet, though ideal, not so very fantastic a London, after all!

The most usual form, however, which this dream-habit takes is that of the possible acquisition of personal property, in the shape of presents. Almost anything is possible in a present; and a child reaches this world so very naked of everything of its own, that with the first dawn of consciousness comes the passion for private ownership, and even an old jam-pot that is shared with none other is encircled with a halo all its own. The approach, therefore, of every Christmas day or birthday means

much wistful dream-creation of ideals that rarely materialize—could not, indeed, be materialized, many of them, outside of the Arabian Nights. The real things that do in fact materialize, those presents which we purchasers carry homewards at nightfall, weary of foot and dubious of mind, or smugly self-satisfied and confident, as the case may be, are sometimes, alas!—through nobody's fault, I most readily admit—very far removed from the pathetic, timid (yet greatly daring), hope of the recipient. Let us be very thankful, we elders whose duty it is to do the right thing on these occasions, that we do not know—that fortunately we can never know—the full beauty and wonder and magic of those presents we *ought* to have given!

In such young ideals there is often a fashion, and the fashions are apt to change from time to time. When I was a small boy, both I and most other boys of my own age and period—the mighty mid-Victorian—were wont to indulge in a day-dream of wildest audacity—to wit, that on some wonderful birthday morning one would be awakened by the sound of a pawing and a crunching of the gravel outside, that one would spring from bed with beating heart, would fling wide the lattice-window, and looking down would see on the carriage-drive a neatly attired groom holding the bridle of a peerless pony, a cream-colored pony—it was always cream-colored—with a long flowing tail (it always had a long flowing tail). I find, after delicate and tactful inquiry among boys of the present generation, that much the same daring dream is apt to haunt them as birthdays draw near—with a slight difference due to the change of fashion mentioned above. They, too, hope to be awakened by that same crunching of gravel outside; they, too, expect to spring delightedly from bed and fling the casement wide. What their enraptured eyes, however, are now to look down upon is a peerless cream-colored motor-car with a long flowing wheel-base; or at the very least, a snorting and quivering young motor-cycle. The visions, you see, are essentially the same; and doubtless the latter is as rarely realized as ever the former was.

Now, it will be noticed that each of the instances I have given was taken from the fancy realm of childhood; deliberately so, for the reason that the child-dream is the more simple, clear-cut, and vivid. But I will now dare to assert that these instances might nearly as effectively have been taken from the mental processes of one of ourselves. It is true that for *us* mystery and awe and wonder spring up no more at the mention of sea or lake or great mountains; but which of us, even to-day, when about to visit some new far-distant city or country, does not form, sometimes deliberately but usually almost unconsciously, a picture of it, more or less vivid, beforehand? And do we not nearly always find in our past imaginings, when we take the trouble to refer back to them, just those two touchstones of the ideal—a fantastic unlikeness to the real thing, together with a special beauty nowhere to be actually found? All of us who have been in Rome can remember our coming there for the first time in our lives, and the preconception of the place that we brought along with us. Do we not all remember, when we reached Rome at last, the same two things—the absence of that strangeness which I have called the fantastic element and which somehow we cannot keep out of our imaginings, and secondly, the slight touch of disappointment that even the beauty of Rome was not just that particular beauty that we had caught a glimpse of through the magic casement of our idealism?

To pass to the next of my simple instances—the occasional (only occasional) slight disappointment of the child at first sight of the long expected relative. Of course, by this time *we* are well aware of the superlative and abiding charm of our grandmothers; or else we have learned by sad experience not to expect very much from any of our relations. But indeed this instinctive craving for a finer type of humanity than we actually find around us is the most widespread of all forms of idealism, and is very significant—indeed enormously significant. Some little time ago the natural explanation would have been, that in our nature, now sadly degenerate, there still lurked some sub-con-

scious recollection of a better age when we were to our present selves as our present selves are, say, to a marmoset. To-day we do not admit degeneracy, and therefore hold it to be but a part of the mysterious subliminal "urge" which has thrust us up from protoplasms to marmosets and such, and from them to ourselves of to-day. The fact remains that the feeling is there, in the man and woman as in the child, and we can put this to the test at any time by examining our own feelings as regards our hero of the hour, be he statesman, soldier, poet or what not when met in the flesh at last. Would we not nearly always—now I am asking for great frankness and a most naked self-examination—would we not nearly always have liked him to be—well, at least just a little different, a little finer, a little more after the pattern we could so easily have made him ourselves, if we had only been the Almighty for five minutes? Well, it is just because we are all idealists, and all paint our dream-heroes instinctively as finer than they are, that we can recall to mind so very few heroes we could not have improved upon. Indeed, I suspect that it is only popular actors who successfully pass the test, and face the daylight as confidently as the footlight.

The Greeks, who were in a way greater idealists than we, were also idealists of a more practical sort. By this I mean that, having arrived at their ideals, they were satisfied with them, and thereupon proceeded to set them forth, to display them, nay more, to perpetuate them as the final ideal in bronze, marble, and so on. In their theology and their literature, again, still satisfied with the ideal they had arrived at, they produced the demi-god—the man made perfect as they saw perfection, very flesh of our flesh, always essential man, and yet a god too, or at least a *divus,* one whom, while hailing him at times as a brother, you were also free to worship as a god, if you wanted to. Now we Northerners would never have done all these things, even if we had had the particular genius or technical skill; because *we* are never satisfied with our ideals, never reach even a temporary finality, must always be breaking our moulds, re-fusing our metal,

entreating our public—which is of course the world itself—to wait a little bit longer, till we can give them the real thing at last. And meantime we give them nothing—or at least so very little! This, I think, marks the eternal difference between the South and the North; and to bear this in mind may be of some assistance to us Northern students on our way through the galleries of old world cities.

Which is the method of idealism of most benefit for the race? That of the South, which arrives, attains, achieves, and then—well, remains there satisfied, advancing no more, but yet bequeathing so great a legacy? Or that of the North, which never arrives, achieves but little, yet knows no limit to its flight? It is a big subject, but one we cannot pursue now. It is enough for our purpose to realize that we are all of us, young and old alike, always (though perhaps unconsciously) on the lookout for the half-gods, hoping to come upon them at last in the forms of our heroes. Only, *we* know a little too much, while children never despair. And so the disappointment, alas, is usually the child's; yet not always. His standard being less rigid, he finds his half-gods more easily than we do; and I hope we have all of us enjoyed, in our time, looking on at the innocent and pretty spectacle of a child in the full tide of his hero-worship.

We come now to the last of my illustrations—the child's ideal of personal property, of those wonderful possessions which he dares to dream may possibly come his way, through the medium of some happy stroke of fortune, of an Arab jinni suddenly emerging out of a bottle, or of a fat and elderly godfather suddenly emerging out of a train. Now it may be perfectly true, that a cream-colored pony no longer says very much to any of *us*, at our time of life. But—but—now remember, we are in the confessional to-day—but—how about that cream-colored motor-car? And is not that car of our dreams a Super-Rolls-Royce, and is there another one on the highroads of Europe or America that can compare with it for speed, for perfection of springs, for immunity from breakdowns?

Then again, there are some men to whom I should much like to put this question privately, as soon as I knew them well enough: At about what period of your life was it—when you were, say, thirty, or forty, or fifty—that you sadly but finally laid aside that vision of the ideal steam yacht—the wonderful vessel in which you were wont to visit all the ports and harbors of the world, to lie off tropical islands or breast the long Atlantic rollers, all on the same evening, over the last pipe or even when snugly in bed? But perhaps you have never really laid up your steam yacht, you still stick to it through thick and thin, and you always mean to? If so, you are fortunate indeed. Never let it go. It costs nothing, it has no rivals while afloat; but once it has struck on the rocks of fact and foundered in deep water, it can never be raised to the surface again.

This class of vision, which in the case of a child I call the dream of ownership, in adults frequently takes the form of asking oneself what one would do, if one came unexpectedly into a large fortune. I mean how one would spend the money thus happily and easily acquired. I do not suppose there is any one who has not played with this dream at one time or another, and whose dream has not been composed, as usual, of the two elements of the fantastic and the ideally beautiful, dreams of altruism and of world reform. Fantastic they do not seem to be at the time, all those splendid larks we are planning to have; and as to our world reforms, why, there would be little trouble or sorrow left anywhere if dream notes could be honored on presentation. But supposing that, once in a way, the fortune does really happen to come along, and you find yourself at close grips with a banker, a solicitor, and a stockbroker, seated opposite you at the same table, grimly determined that you shall not make a fool of yourself if *they* can prevent it—how many of your fantasies and your altruisms will those matter-of-fact gentlemen leave you possessed of when they have quite done with you? Well, we can only hope that, as in the old fairy tale, a few gold coins will be

left sticking to the bottom of the bushel measure, and that so your idealism may not have been altogether in vain.

But perhaps the most usual shape which the cream-colored pony assumes in grown-up dreams, is that of the ideal house, estate, country property, always just the right period of architecture, just the proper soil, just the correct distance from town, and furnished, equipped, staffed, and managed, just as we and we alone of all people could do the thing if we had the chance. Now this is never an ignoble dream, for nothing responds so generously to care, love, and expenditure, as a noble house or estate, or fastens itself so closely about the roots of the heart. In this dream, fantasy almost disappears, but beauty has fullest and finest play. Few unworthy desires find room for growth here, and one may even end a wiser and a better man after the enjoyment of a mansion only built in cloud-land. Sometimes, indeed, it is no question of ideal sky-building at all; for the place may be in actual existence, may even be ancestral, and long known and loved as such, it passed away from you perhaps by some hard turn of fortune—but it may still be within reach and possibly some day attainable—and then your dream may be in truth a noble ambition, shaping and driving you towards fine ends, as all true ambitions must.

This contemplation of the ideal house, the house of our secret dreams, leads us by a natural step to the subject of the dream-city, the City Celestial or the New Jerusalem as dreamers of old time were wont to call it; and here we find ourselves at once on a wider platform, and on firmer and surer ground—if one may use such terms of dream-architecture reared in cloud-land. For here the child rarely busies himself. The subject is too ambitious for him, and he generally knows but one town familiarly, if that. The grown man on the other hand, and the grown mind—indeed the best and rarest minds of each generation—have never been ashamed to occupy themselves constantly and openly with this game of ideal town-planning. To our forefathers, as I was saying, the New Jerusalem remained really visionary, literally in

cloud-land; and it is of such a Celestial City that we get occasional glimpses and flashes in the writings of such poets as Crashaw, for instance. But in the early sixteenth century we have Sir Thomas More, the keenest and most penetrating mind of his age, devoting a whole book to the working out of the practical details of such an ideal city as might be given actual earthly shape and form forthwith, if Tudor statesmen would only have the necessary moral courage and vision for the task—for it will be remembered that the governance of the rest of the island of Utopia is based on that of the capital city, and shaped and directed from it.

Again, in the pleasant prose romances of William Morris, there is nearly always an ideal city, of which not only are all the details given with almost wearisome particularity, but sometimes we are supplied with an actual plan, with (I think) points of the compass and a scale. This is doing the thing properly, for if a real city calls for such guidance, how much more an ideal one! Camelot was another ideal city, and Tennyson, once at least turns aside from the incidents he calls his Idylls, to draw a vivid picture of the city of magic that Merlin built for Arthur. But we can all remember instances for ourselves; my point is merely that we need not be ashamed of dreaming on from our ideal house to our ideal city, when we find ourselves dreaming in such good company.

But may not the dream-habit be a possible hindrance to the practical side of life? This is a fair question, and a serious one, because it is the most dangerous thing in the world to affect to despise or ignore the so-called practical side of life—in other words, life itself as it has got to be lived. The answer is, of course, that there are no two sides to life. Life is not like the public school of to-day, with its classical and modern "side," and you choose, or your father chooses for you, probably wrongly in either case, which side you had best "go on," as their jargon has it. Life has only one side to it, and can only be lived in one way; but, as we all know, that way demands constant reactions

and recuperations. Accordingly, from time to time we go to hilltops, or to sea-coasts, or into retreats, or we (some of us) go on the spree, as it is vaguely but pleasantly called. It is all the same—all reaction in one form or another. Well, dreams are but reaction from life, and the easiest, the most accessible form of healing reaction that there is. For your hilltop may disappoint you, and your sea-coast be too stuffy or too expensive, but the mountain air of dreamland is always recuperating, and there Apollo and all the Muses, or at least Pan and his attendant Fauns, await you.

What, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter? Is it not that we are all idealists, whether we would or no? And that we are all idealists, chiefly by virtue of our waking dreams, those very imaginings which we are so ashamed of, and so reluctant to speak about, which we sternly discourage in others, but which all the same we secretly cherish to the very end? For in these dreams we are always better than ourselves, and the world is always better than it is, and surely it is by seeing things as better than they are that one arrives at making them better. This indeed is what "vision" means, and one knows that "without vision the people perish." Not—stay as they are; not even—go backwards. But—perish, from the anemia of no ideals.

But why talk—it may fairly be asked—about making the world better, instead of frankly claiming that dreaming and idealizing are in themselves the most delightful pursuit in the world, far surpassing even the shooting of big game in Africa so invariably resorted to by disappointed heroes of lady-novelists? Why not simply urge that ideals should be resolutely pursued for their own sake, however far they may lead us up into the empyrean of thought, and quite regardless of whether they may finally result in actual achievement in terms of this world's work? Well, that is a perfectly fair objection; for, after all, perhaps the present world is neither very much better nor very much worse than it has always been, and possibly never will be.

But I would submit that in the end it comes to very much the same thing, whether we think of ultimate consequences to the world or not. For if we are perfectly honest with ourselves, we must admit that we always do the thing that we really like doing, for the sake of the doing itself. If in addition we achieve something definite, so much the better for ourselves and for the world. If not—and it is not given to every one to achieve—at least we shall have had our ideals.

CASTLES IN SPAIN*

JOHN GALSWORTHY

(Material progress in America was always for George F. Babbitt a theme for admiring comment. There are many who take a similar attitude. To them our bath tubs, telephones, automobiles, and skyscrapers are evidences of a superiority of culture. To be so preoccupied with material things as to be blind to all personal values seems to have been a characteristic of the majority in other generations than ours:

> The world is too much with us: late and soon
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:

But there is at least one respect in which the present generation is in greater danger than former ones. The era of machines and of quantity production has taken away what was formerly for many men their chief source of personal satisfaction: the craftsman's pride in his work. There are thus two sides to our progress, and the problem of freeing man from this new enslavement. Different men have advocated different solutions. It is in keeping with Mr. Galsworthy's temperament that he sees in mankind's instinct for beauty the saving factor. The reader will perceive a close relationship in theme between this essay and *Ideals and Day Dreams,* and also *The Politics of Martha and of Mary.*

John Galsworthy was born in Surrey, in 1867, of an old Devonshire family. He was educated at Harrow and Oxford; studied law and was admitted to the Bar in 1890. Not being required to make money, because of his father's situation, and having no

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taste for law, he traveled extensively for nearly two years. Afterwards he took to writing and in ten years had made himself famous. Since then his position has been steadily strengthened until he has become one of the foremost novelists and dramatists in England. His work is notable for its economy of words, its breadth of social sympathy and deep pity, its sharp perception and extreme sensitiveness. *The Forsyte Saga* is one of the most notable achievements in modern English fiction.)

CASTLES IN SPAIN

Of what do we moderns dream? What are our castles in Spain? This question crossed my mind in Seville cathedral, that stone fabric of man's greatest dream in the Ages to which we have been accustomed to apply the word "dark." Travelers in Spain who consult their guide-books may read: "On the eighth day of July, in the year 1401, the Dean and Chapter of Seville assembled in the Court of the Elms and solemnly resolved: 'Let us build us a church so great that those who come after us may think us mad to have attempted it!' The church took one hundred and fifty years to build."

And in that stupendously beautiful building, raised by five succeeding generations to the glory of themselves and their God, one could not help wondering wherein lay the superiority of ourselves, Children of Light, over those Sons of Darkness.

We too dream, no doubt—not always with a Freudian complex; and our dreams have results, such as the Great Dam at Assouan, the Roosevelt Dam in Arizona, the Woolworth Building, the Forth Bridge, the Power Works at Niagara, the Panama Canal (which took one-tenth of the time the Sons of Darkness lavished on Seville cathedral). But all these things were dreamed and fabricked out for immediate material benefit. Modern engineers are often lovers of beauty, and men of imagination, but that does not touch the argument developed here. The old builders of pyramids and mosques and churches, built for no physical advantage in this life. They carved and wrought and slowly lifted stone on stone for remote and, as they thought, spiritual ends. We moderns mine and forge and mason-up our monuments to the immediate profit of our bodies. Incidentally they may give pleasure to the spirit of John Ruskin, but we did not

exactly build them for that purpose. Have we raised anything really great in stone or brick for a mere idea since Christopher Wren built St. Paul's Cathedral?

Sons of Darkness and Children of Light both have worshiped a half-truth. The ancients built for to-morrow in another world; they forgot that all of us have a to-day in this. They spent riches and labor to save the souls of their hierarchy, but they kept their laborers so poor that they had no souls to save. They left astounding testimony to human genius and tenacity, but it never seems to have ruffled their consciousness that they purchased much of that ideal beauty with slavery, misery, and blood.

In place of those ideals—Art, and the future life of princes and prelates—we moderns pursue what we call Progress. All our stupendous achievements have this progressive notion at their back. Brooklyn Bridge may look beautiful in any light, and Sheffield chimney-stacks may look beautiful in the dark; but they were not put up for that reason, nor even because we thought we were thereby handing our Presidents or Prime Ministers the keys of Heaven. We worship Science, Industry, and Trade. We think that if we make the wheels go round fast enough, mankind is bound to rise on the wings of wealth. Look after the body, we say, and the spirit will look after itself. Whether we save a greater proportion of our bodies than the ancients did of souls, is a question; but no such trifling doubts shake our belief in Progress. Our modern castle in Spain is, in one word, "Production."

Most men and women have an instinctive love of beauty, and some natural pride in the work of their brains and hands; but Machinery has divided us from the ancients, and quietly, gradually, shifted the central point of man's Philosophy. Before the industrial era set in, men used to make things by hand; they were in some sort artists, with at least the craftsman's pride in their work. Now they press buttons, turn wheels; don't make completed articles; work with monotony at the section of an

article—so many hours of machine-driving a day, the total result of which is never a man's individual achievement. "Intelligent specialism," says the writer on Labor Policy, Doctor Harry Roberts, "is one thing. It consists in one man learning how to do one thing specially well. But the sort of specializing which consists in setting thousands of human beings during their whole working lives to such soul-destroying jobs as fixing the bristles into a hair-brush, pasting labels on jam-pots, or nearly any one of the varieties of machine-tending, is quite another thing. It is the utter negation of human nature." The tendency of modern "Production" is to center a man's interest not in his working day, but outside of it—at least, in the lower ranks of industry. The old artificers drew in their culture, such as it was, from their work. In these days culture, such as it is, is grafted on to the workman in his leisure, as an antidote to wheel-driving. Hewers, delvers, drawers of water, never, perhaps, took pride in their work; and there are still many among us to whom their work is of absorbing interest. But, on the whole, the change has put pride of quantity above pride of quality. In old days the good thing was often naturally supplied; nowadays it is more often artificially demanded.

No one objects to Production sanely and coherently directed to fine purposes. But this Progress of ours, which is supposed to take care of our bodies, and of which Machinery is the mistress —does it progress? We used to have the manor-house with half-a-dozen hovels in its support. Now we have twenty miles of handsome residences, with a hundred and twenty miles of ugly back streets, reeking with smoke and redolent of dullness, dirt, and discontent. The proportions are still unchanged and the purple patches of our great towns are too often as rouge on the cheeks and salve on the lips of a corpse. Is that Progress?

Real progress means leveling up and gradually extinguishing the disproportion between manor and hovel, residence and back street.

Let us fantastically conceive the Civic authorities of London

on the eighth day of July, in the year 1921, solemnly resolving: "We will remake of London a city so beautiful and sweet to dwell in, that those who come after us shall think us mad to have attempted it." It might well take five generations to remake of London a stainless city of Portland stone, full of baths and flowers and singing birds—not in cages. We should want a procession of Civic authorities who steadily loved castles in Spain. For a Civic body only lives about four years, and cannot bind its successor. Have we even begun to realize the difficulty of real progress, in a democratic age? He who furnishes an antidote to the wasteful, shifting tendency of short immediate policies under a system of government by bodies elected for short terms, will be the greatest benefactor of the age. We have to find that antidote, or—discover Democracy to be fraudulent.

Again are we not unfortunate in letting Civic life be run by those who were born seeing two inches before their noses, and whose education, instead of increasing, has reduced those inches to one? It seems ungrateful to criticize the practical business man, whose stamina and energy make the more imaginative gasp. One owes him, in fact, so much, that one would like to owe him more. But does his vision as a rule extend beyond keeping pace with the present? And without vision—the people perish! The Age is so practical, that the word "visionary" has come to have a slighting significance. And yet, unless we incorporate beauty in our scheme of life to-day, and teach the love of beauty to our children, the life of to-morrow and the children thereof must needs be as far from beauty as we are now. Is it not strange to set men to direct the education, housing, and amusements of their fellow-citizens if they have not a love of Beauty and some considerable knowledge of Art? And have not the present generation of business men—with notable exceptions—an indulgent contempt for Art and Beauty? Years ago the Headmaster of a Public School made use of these words: "I'm glad to see so many boys going in for Art; it is an excellent hobby to pass the time *when you have nothing better to do!*"

He had been teaching *Greek* for half-a-century; and it was Greek to him that Art has been the greatest factor in raising mankind from its old savage state. The contemplation of beautiful visions, emotions, thoughts, and dreams, expressed beautifully in words, stone, metal, paint, and music, has slowly, generation by generation, uplifted man and mollified his taste for "long pig" (as the South Sea Islander calls his edible enemy). The uplifting part of religion is but the beautiful expression of exalted feeling. The rest of religion (including the ceremony of eating "long pig") is only superstition. Think of the thousand wars fought in the name of Superstition; the human sacrifices, the tortures of the Inquisitions; the persecutions, intolerances, and narrow cruelties perpetrated even to this day! The teachings of Buddha, of Christ, of St. Francis d'Assisi, were the expression of exalted feeling; simple, and touching the hearts of men, as all true beauty does. They have done an ennobling work, but they belong emphatically to the cult of Beauty.

Trade has been a mollifying factor, an elevator in the human hotel, only in so far as it opens up communications, and is the coach in which Art and Beauty ride; of itself—it has no elevating influence.

Beauty, alone, in the largest sense of the word—the yearning for it, the contemplation of it—has civilized mankind. And no human being ever contributed to that process who thought he had "something better to do." We don't take Beauty seriously. Immediate profit rules the roost in this Age of ours, and I leave it to the conscience of the Age to decide whether that is good. For every Age has a conscience; though it never comes to life till the Age is on its deathbed.

The fault of all Ages has been this: The knowledge and the love of Beauty has been kept as a preserve for the few, the possession of a caste or clique. No great proportion of us are capable of creating or expressing Beauty; but an immensely greater proportion of us are capable of appreciating it than have ever been given the chance of so doing. It should be our Castle

in Spain to clear our Age of that defect, and put Beauty within the reach of all.

Machinery has come to stay.

It may be true that engineers, authors, stonecutters, artists, and many others still love Beauty and take pride in their work. But what about the great majority—the label-pasters, the wheel-drivers, the stokers, the clerks, the shop-girls, the bristle-fixers, all the other slaves of modern machinery? For all such we must rely on grafted culture: in other words, on education, rousing and fostering in the young that instinct for Beauty which is in nearly all of us. We have exceptional facilities nowadays. Besides teaching cooking and the fine art of being clean, we can bring an inkling of the other fine Arts, architecture, literature, painting, music of past and present, to children even in the humblest schools; teach children to appreciate the beauty of Nature, and give them some idea of taste. Revolution or evolution, both are vain unless they mean demand for greater dignity of human life. What use in B. despoiling A., if B. is going to use his spoils no better, probably worse, than A.?

The word Beauty is not here used in any precious sense. Its precious definitions are without number, or—value to speak of. It is here used to mean everything which promotes the true dignity of human life. For instance: To be "a good sportsman" a man shuns that which lowers his dignity, dims his idea of his own quality; and his conception of his own quality derives obscurely from his sense of Beauty. The dignity of human life demands, in fact, not only such desirable embroideries as pleasant sound, fine form, and lovely color; but health, strength, cleanliness, balance, joy in living, just conduct and kind conduct. A man who truly loves Beauty hates to think that he enjoys it at the expense of starved and stunted human beings or suffering animals. Mere æstheticism can be cruel or pettifogging; but such is not the beauty which gleams on the heights in the sunrise—not our Castle in Spain.

Sentiment apart, the ideal of Beauty is the best investment

modern man can make; for nothing else—certainly not Trade—will keep him from extirpating the human species. Science in the hands of engineers and chemists has developed destructive powers, which increase a hundredfold with each decade, while the reproductive powers and inclination of the human being do not vary. Nothing in the world but the love of Beauty in its broad sense stands between Man and the full and reckless exercise of his competitive appetites. The Great War was a little war compared with that which, through the development of scientific destruction, might be waged next time. There is sheer necessity for investments in the ideal of Beauty. No other security will give us interest on our money, and our money back. Unbalanced Trade, Science, Industry, give, indeed, a high monetary rate of interest, but only till the crash comes again and the world goes even more bankrupt than it is at present. The professor who has invented a rocket which will go to the moon and find out all about it (though whether it is to be boomerang enough to come back with the story, we are not told), that Professor would have done more real good if he had taught a school full of children to see the beauty of—Moonshine.

The next war will be fought from the air, and from under the sea, with explosives, gas, and the germs of disease, distributed by wireless. It may be over before it is declared. This is no exaggeration. The final war necessary for the complete extirpation of mankind, will be fought with radium or atomic energy; and we shall have no need to examine the moon, for the earth will be as lifeless. This possibly is an exaggeration.

But it is sentiment, which really makes the wheels go round; for not even "big business" rules our instincts and passions, and the question for modern man is: What shall he be sentimental about? Which is the fairer Castle in Spain—Quantity or Quality—blind production, or a definite new ideal, call it what you will, Beauty, Quality, or the Dignity of Human Life. What ideals have we at present? Happiness in a future life? If there be a future life for the individual, shall we find it repaying if we

have not longed for and served Quality in this: not had that kind and free and generous philosophy which belongs to the cult of Beauty, and alone gives peace of mind? The pursuit of Beauty includes whatever may be true in the ideal of Happiness in a future life; and all that is good in the other current ideal—Wealth or comfort in this life, for it demands physical health and well-being, sane minds in sane bodies, which depend on a sufficiency of material comfort. The rest of the ideal of Wealth is mere Fat, sagging beyond the point of Balance. Modern civilization offers us, in fact, a compound between "Happiness in a future life" and "Material comfort in this," lip-serving the first, and stomach serving the second. You get the keys of Heaven from your Bank, but not unless you have a good balance. Modern civilization, on the whole, is camouflaged commercialism, wherein to do things well for the joy of doing them well, is eccentricity. We even commercialize salvation—for so much virtue, so much salvation! Quid pro quo!

To give the devil its due, ours is the best Age men ever lived in; we are all more comfortable and virtuous than we ever were; we have many new accomplishments, advertisements in green pastures, telephones in bedrooms, more newspapers than we want to read, and extremely punctilious diagnosis of maladies. A doctor examined a young lady the other day, and among his notes were these: "Not afraid of small rooms, ghosts, or thunderstorms; not made drunk by hearing Wagner; brown hair, artistic hands; had a craving for chocolate in 1918." The Age is most thorough and accomplished, but with a kind of deadly practicality. All for to-day, nothing for to-morrow! The future will never think us mad for attempting what we do attempt; we build no Seville cathedrals. We never get ahead of time. We have just let slip a chance to revitalize country life. At demobilization we might have put hundreds of thousands on land, which needs them so very badly. And we have put in all not so many as the war took off the land. Life on the land means hard work and few cinemas; but it also means hearty stock for the next generation,

and the power of feeding ourselves on an island which the next war might completely isolate. A nation concerned only with its present is like the man who was fishing and, feeling sleepy, propped his rod up on the bank with the line in the water. A wag spied him sleeping, took the rod, waded across the river, propped up the rod on the opposite bank, and lay down behind a hedge to watch for the awakening. Such is the awakening in store for nations which enjoy their present, and forget their future.

The pursuit of Beauty as a national ideal, the building of that castle in Spain, required long and patient labor and steadfastness of ideal before we can begin to see rise a really fair edifice of human life upon this earth.

All literary men can tell people what they ought not to be; that is—literature. But to tell them what they ought to do is—politics, of which no literary man is guilty; for politics and literature afford the only instance known in virtuous countries—of divorce by mutual consent. It would be sheer impertinence for a literary man to suggest anything practical!

But let him, at least, make a few affirmations. He believes that modern man is a little further from being a mere animal than the men of the Dark Ages, however great the Castle in Spain those men left for us to look upon; but he is sure that we are in far greater danger than ever they were of a swift decline. From that decline he is convinced that only the love and cult of Beauty will save us!

By the love and cult of Beauty he means a great deal; *A higher and wider conception of the dignity of human life;* the teaching of what Beauty is, to all—not merely to the few; the cultivation of goodwill, so that we wish and work and dream that not only ourselves but everybody may be healthy and happy; and, above all, the fostering of the habit of doing things and making things well, for the joy of the work and the pleasure of achievement, rather than for the gain they will bring us. With these as the rules, instead of, as now, the riders, the wheels of

an insensate scientific industrialism, whose one idea is to make money and get ahead of other people, careless of direction towards heaven or hell, might conceivably be spoked. Our Age lacks an Ideal, expressed with sufficient concreteness to be like a vision, beckoning. In these unsuperstitious days no other ideal seems worthy of us, or, indeed, possible to us, save Beauty—or call it if you will, the Dignity of Human Life.

Writers sometimes urge the need for more spiritual beauty in our lives; but it is unfortunate to talk of spiritual beauty. We must be able to smell, and see, hear, feel, and taste our Ideal as well; must know by plain evidence that it is lifting human life, the heritage of all, not merely of the refined and leisured among us. The body and soul are one for the purpose of all real evolution, and regrettable is any term which suggests a divorce between them. The Dignity of Human Life is an unmistakable and comprehensive phrase. Offense against that Ideal is the modern Satan. And the only way in which each one can say "Retro, Satanas," is to leave his or her tiny corner of the universe a little more dignified, lovely and lovable than he or she found it.

The world's general mood at the moment is disillusionment and spite—a world so cross-eyed that when it weeps out of one eye the tear runs down the other cheek. It is difficult, no doubt, to be in love with a lady like that, and hard in these days not to be a cynic. Latest opinion—unless there is a later—assigns eight or ten thousand years as the time during which what we know as civilization has been at work. But ten thousand years is a considerable period of mollification, and one had rashly hoped that mankind was not to be so speedily stampeded; that traditions of gentleness, fair play, chivalry, had more strength among Western peoples than they have been proved to have since 1914; that mob feeling might have been less, instead of, as it seems, more potent. And yet, alongside of stupidity, savagery, greed and mob violence, run an amazing individual patience, good

humor, endurance, and heroism, which save man from turning his back on himself and the world, with the words: "Cats and monkeys, monkeys and cats; all life is there!" Fear, after all, is at the back of nearly all savagery; and man must infallibly succumb to the infections of Fear if there be not present in him that potent antidote—the sense of Human Dignity, which is but a love of and a belief in Beauty. What applies to the individual applies to the civilization of which he forms a part. Our civilization, if it is to endure, must have an Ideal, a Star on which to fix its eyes—something distant and magnetic to draw it on, something to strive towards, beyond the troubled and shifting needs and passions and prejudices of the moment. Those who wish to raise the Dignity of Human Life, should try to give civilization that ideal, to equip the world with the only vision which can save it from spite and the crazy competitions which lead thereto. The past seven years have been the result of the past seven hundred years. The war was no spasmodic visitation, but the culmination of age-long competitions. The past seven years have devoured many millions of grown men, more millions of little children—prevented their birth, killed them, or withered them for life. If modern individuals and modern nations pursue again these crazy competitions, without regard for Beauty or the Dignity of Human Life, we shall live to see ten millions perish for every million perished in this war. We shall live to curse the day, when, at the end of so great a lesson, we were too practical and business-like to take it to heart.

We must look things in the face. Ideals should be grounded in reality; and it is no use blinking the general nature of man, or thinking that Rome can be built in a day. But with all our prejudices and passions, and all our "business instinct," we have also the instinct for Beauty, and a sense of what is dignified. On that we must build, if we wish to leave to those who come after us the foundations of a Castle in Spain such as the world has not yet seen; to leave our successors in mood and heart to con-

tinue our work, so that one hundred and fifty years, perhaps, from now, human life may really be dignified and beautiful, not just a breathless, grudging, visionless scramble from birth to death, of a night with no star out.

SCIENCE AND THE FAITH OF THE MODERN *

EDWIN GRANT CONKLIN

(In their desire to convert the masses some champions of evolution have proclaimed a facile reconciliation between the findings of science and the theology based upon an old cosmogony. Such an attitude of apology minimizes the importance of the change in thought and is harmful to the true interest of science and the people it would serve. Rightly understood, the conclusions of science profoundly affect mankind. Of what use to themselves would it be for the masses of mankind to accept the theory of evolution as being a mere academic assumption unrelated to their personal lives, and to continue to live as before in a world of moral and ethical conceptions formulated before the discovery of natural law? In this world right and wrong, truth and error, freedom and responsibility, reward and punishment were absolute. It was a world of specific commandments, of authority and obedience, suited, as Professor Conklin points out, for children and the childhood of the race. The difficulty of fitting the mature and thinking man into such a rigid system is obvious, and the success attending the attempt has not been remarkable.

The author of this brilliant paper, summarizing the trend of scientific thought and its startling importance for the daily living and thinking of mankind, is Edwin Grant Conklin, Professor of Biology at Princeton University and author, among other things, of *The Direction of Human Evolution.* Whereas acceptance of authority was the keynote of the old order, understanding is the keynote of the new. To profit by the discovery of natural law

* From *Scribner's Magazine,* November, 1925.

one must understand it. Authority is necessary before the dawn of intelligence. On the other hand, the growth of freedom entails an increase of responsibility. In the words of the author, "Freedom is one of the principal goals of human endeavor, but the best use man can make of his freedom is to place limitations upon it." Thus science provides for growth by replacing external restraints by internal inhibitions. The law of life, which is growth, is thus fulfilled. Who, indeed, rightly understanding, can fail to be inspired by such vistas of growth and progress as are provided by this piercing and many-eyed vision that men call science?)

SCIENCE AND THE FAITH OF THE MODERN

A BOOK was published in this country two years ago bearing the striking title "Science Remaking the World." Fourteen well-known scholars contributed chapters on subjects ranging all the way from electrons to evolution, from industries to food, medicine, and public health, all showing how man is gaining control over his environment. But science is remaking the world in much more fundamental ways than in these practical and material respects. It is remaking not only the outer world in which we live, but also the inner world of our thoughts and ideals. It has brought about the greatest intellectual revolution in human history, a revolution that concerns the origin, nature, and destiny of man himself—and thoughtful men everywhere are inquiring what the results are likely to be.

Many distinguished authors, scientists, philosophers, and theologians have attempted recently to analyze present tendencies and to forecast the future, with results that range all the way from ecstatic visions of optimists to the dismal lucubrations of pessimists. Apostles of sweetness and light and eternal progress have been more than matched by the "Gloomy Dean"; Haldane and Thomson have been answered by Russell and Schiller. Ancient mythologies have been revived in the titles of modern Sibylline Books that set forth the future of mankind as symbolized by Dædalus, Icarus, Tantalus, and Prometheus.

Many advocates of the old philosophy and theology of supernaturalism and tradition attribute the present disturbed state of the world to science, which they say has been undermining the old foundations of the social order, and they call upon all men everywhere to repent and to return to the old faith. On the other hand, many advocates of science and the new knowledge

maintain that for persons of mature minds, the old, naïve faith of childhood and of the childhood age of the race is gone, and gone forever, and that the only hope for the progress of mankind lies in more knowledge, newer and better faith, and not in a return to old beliefs.

Let us briefly compare some aspects of the old faith and the new knowledge and then inquire what is the duty of forward-looking men in this age of intellectual, social, and religious unrest.

I. The old cosmogony, philosophy, and theology sought comfort, satisfaction, and inspiration rather than unwelcome truth. It magnified man by making him the climax and goal of all creation. It placed the earth, man's home, at the center of the universe. The sun, moon, and stars were created to give light to the earth. All things were made to minister to man's welfare. Man himself was created in the image of God, perfect and immortal. By his first disobedience he fell from his high estate and

"Brought death into the world and all our woe."

But the promise was given that ultimately evil should perish and good should triumph. The great Drama of Humanity ran from Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained, from initial perfection to final perfection.

In this old philosophy and theology supernaturalism was universal; there was no proper conception of nature and of natural law. The earth was peopled not only with godlike men but also with man-like gods, angels, spirits, witches, demons. Some supernatural being was responsible for every phenomenon. The movements of sun and stars, the return of the seasons, wind and rain, lightning and rainbow, volcanoes and earthquakes, plagues and pestilences, were willed by some supernatural being. All nature was the expression of wills, big or little, good or bad.

The old ethics was based primarily on the will of God, supernaturally revealed in code or book, and to this certain rules were added from time to time by Church or State under divine

guidance. Right was what God approved, wrong was what He forbade, and if ever doubts arose with regard to these there were not lacking those who would interpret the will of God. Man himself was a free moral agent. No bonds of heredity or necessity rested on his mind or soul. He was the architect of his own character, the arbiter of his own destiny. All good was the result of good will, all evil of evil will, and good would be rewarded and evil punished either in this life or in an eternal life of bliss or torment.

There was enormous satisfaction in this view of the universe and of man. It not only glorified man, explained evil, and promised redemption, but it was a great stimulus to efforts for betterment and a source of high ideals and aspirations, and undoubtedly its commands and sanctions worked powerfully to preserve the ethical code. Furthermore, there was admirable directness and positiveness in the old ethics regarding right and wrong, truth and error, freedom and responsibility, rewards and punishments. There was no hazy middle ground between these, no relativity of truth or right or duty to confuse the mind. Things were absolutely true or false, completely right or wrong. This old faith with its specific commandments was especially well suited to immature minds. In the childhood of the individual and of the race there is need of authority and obedience before it is possible to appeal to reason. Childhood is predominantly the age of obedience, adolescence of imitation and example, maturity of reason and judgment. The results of permitting children to grow up as their nature and judgments dictate are perilous for the children and annoying to the neighbors. One such harassed neighbor asked the mother of some children of nature how she expected them to become civilized, and she said, "Oh, we are relying on the germ-plasm"; upon which the unscientific neighbor eagerly asked: "Where do you get it?"

Heredity, or the germ-plasm, determines only the capacities and potentialities of any organism. In every individual there are many capacities that remain undeveloped because of the lack

of stimuli suitable to call them forth. These inherited potentialities are both good and bad, social and antisocial, and it is the purpose of education to develop the former and to suppress the latter. In the heredity of every human being there are many alternative personalities. Education is chiefly habit formation, and good education consists in the formation of good habits of body, mind, and morals. It is the duty of parents and teachers to guide children in this respect, to replace unreason by reason, selfishness by unselfishness, and antisocial habits by social ones. To trust to germ-plasm is to forget that heredity furnishes capacities for evil as well as for good, and to disregard the universal experience of mankind.

Society is compelled to repress many of the primordial reactions and instincts of the natural man. Our whole culture rests upon the suppression of antisocial impulses and the cultivation of social and moral reactions. If such reactions are to be built into character and become "second nature," they must be cultivated early, preferably in the home, and ethical teaching must be clear-cut and authoritative. The old ethics, when wisely inculcated, was admirably suited to this purpose. It did develop men and women of high moral character, and to a large extent it forms the foundation of our present social systems.

II. Contrast with this older philosophy, theology, and ethics the newer revelations of science. The man of scientific mind seeks truth rather than comfort or satisfaction. He would follow evidence wherever it leads, confident that even unwelcome truth is better than cherished error, that the permanent welfare of the human race depends upon "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men," and that truth alone can make us free. Science is not an esoteric cult and scientific methods are not mysterious or magical processes. Huxley once defined science as trained and organized common sense, and scientific methods of inquiry are only the careful and accurate methods that are used by intelligent people everywhere in the affairs of every-day life. These methods consist in observation, comparison, analysis, and

generalization. Every sensible person uses these methods in his business or profession, and in his judgments of men, policies, and institutions. It is only in its greater accuracy that the scientific method differs from those in universal use. It is true that no scientific observation, comparison, analysis, or generalization is ever complete or perfect; it is true that in science, as well as in all affairs of life, we deal with probabilities of a higher or lower order rather than with certainties; it is true that all generalizations are theories rather than facts and that all scientific knowledge is relative and not absolute. But in spite of these limitations, no other method of inquiry has been found as reliable as the scientific method.

It would seem incredible, were it not an actual fact, that any one should object to the use of such methods of inquiry regarding the origin and nature of man, society, government, ethics, religion, the Bible, or anything else; but, alas! there are thousands, if not millions, of people in this country, some of them educated and intelligent with respect to things with which they have had experience, who refuse to apply common-sense methods of inquiry to such subjects, who characterize those who do this as atheists, blasphemers, dishonest scoundrels, and who denounce science and scientists for laying impious hands on sacred things which must never be studied by the methods of common sense.

To those who refuse to apply scientific methods of inquiry to the study of man and society, cosmogony and theology, ethics and religion, but who base their whole conception of these upon ancient traditions or unreasoning emotions, science has no message; they neither understand the language nor appreciate the methods of science. But to the increasing number of those who recognize that man, society, and human institutions are proper subjects of scientific investigation, and who also realize that neither authority, tradition, nor prejudice is a safe guide in the search for truth, the question may well arise as to what effect the scientific study of these subjects will have on human ideals, aspirations, and conduct. Accordingly, these remarks are ad-

dressed to those only who accept the methods and results of science in their application to man but who are concerned that mankind shall grow not only wiser but also better as the ages pass.

The methods and results of science have shaken to their foundations the old cosmogony and philosophy. It is now universally recognized that the earth is not the center of the universe, but a mere dot in a mediocre solar system whirling through immeasurable space. Man is only one of some millions of species of living things on the earth, and although in mind and soul he is the paragon of animals, it is becoming increasingly certain that the traditional views regarding his supernatural creation and divine perfection are no longer tenable. On the contrary, the sciences of geology, biology, psychology, sociology, and anthropology are furnishing an ever-increasing amount of evidence that the body, mind, and society of man are products of evolution. The old philosophy of universal supernaturalism is giving place to a philosophy of universal naturalism; everything that has been scientifically analyzed is found to be natural—that is, orderly, lawful, causal—and many men of science claim that "nature is everything that is." Belief in an anthropomorphic God, a big man in the skies who made us little men in His own image, established society, ethics, and religion by His commands, and governs the world as a human autocrat, is rapidly yielding place to more idealistic conceptions.

It appears probable that the universe and man are subject to immutable natural laws; that causality is universal in the living, as well as in the lifeless world; that the entire man, body, mind, and soul, develops from a germ and is the product of heredity and environment; that will itself is no exception to universal causality, since it is merely a link in the chain of cause and effect, being itself the effect of preceding causes and the cause of succeeding effects; that freedom is the result of intelligence acting as cause; that intelligence is the capacity of consciously profiting by experience; that instincts and emo-

tions are causally related to body functions; that society, ethics, and even religion are based primarily on instincts, emotions, reaction patterns, and ductless glands.

Some of these conclusions are tentative and may be modified by further research, but there can be no doubt as to the general trend of the scientific study of man and his activities. These conclusions, or others of a similar nature, are now accepted by most of the recent investigators in human biology, psychology, and sociology. The application of science and the scientific method of observation and experiment to human behavior has revealed much concerning the physiology of mind as well as the hidden springs of action, the unconscious complexes that determine our constitutional hopes and fears, our prevailing loves and hates, our delusions and failures, and "the sin which doth so easily beset us." Recent studies indicate that there is also a physiology of ethics, and that our conceptions of right and wrong, of good and bad, are associated with particular body functions, reaction patterns, and instincts. In short, man himself, in all of his manifold complexities and activities, is a part of Nature.

These studies and conclusions have raised serious apprehensions on the part of many friends of science and violent opposition on the part of some adherents of the old order, who hold that the guesses of "science falsely so called" are destroying the foundations of religion, ethics and all that is most valuable in human life. On the other hand, many Christian scientists who have been convinced by the evidence of the essential truth of these new discoveries, are equally certain that truth and goodness and beauty, faith and hope and love, reverence and aspirations and ideals are just as real and as desirable as they ever were, and that religion and ethics remain secure whether the old traditions stand or not.

There can be no doubt that science has given us grander conceptions of the universe than were ever dreamed of in former times. Contrast the old cosmogony with the revelations of modern astronomy, physics, and geology; the old conception of the

creation of the universe in six literal days with our present conceptions of the immensity and eternity of natural processes; the old views of the special creation by a supernatural Workman of every one of a million different species of animals and plants, beasts of prey and their victims, parasites and pests, with the scientific view that animals and plants and the universe itself are the results of an immensely long process of evolution!

Even in its revelations concerning man, science is giving us not only truer but also grander views than the old ones. There is sublimity in the conception of man as the climax of vast ages of evolution, as the highest and best product of this eternal process, as the promise of something better still to be. The evolution of man from lower forms of life is not degrading but inspiring. Nature and human history love to proclaim the fact that a humble origin does not preclude a glorious destiny. "The real dignity of man consists not in his origin, but in what he is and in what he may become."

So far as the substitution of natural law for chance or caprice is concerned it has been a great gain not only in our conceptions of the world but also with regard to our inmost selves, for it means order instead of chaos, understanding in place of confusion. If all our activities are the results of natural causation, it means that the will is not absolutely free, but practical people have always known that freedom is relative and not absolute; that we are partly free and partly bound. We know that we are able to inhibit many reactions, instincts, and forms of behavior and to choose between alternatives that are offered. But this does not mean that such freedom is uncaused activity; on the contrary, science shows that it is the result of internal causes, such as physiological states, conflicting stimuli, the remembered results of past experience or education, all of which are themselves the results of preceding causes. Conscious will is not "a little deity encapsuled in the brain" but intelligence acting as cause, while intelligence in turn is the capacity of consciously profiting by experience.

But however we may explain that which we call *freedom*, it is plain that for practical purposes it exists, though in varying degrees in different persons or in the same person at different times, and that it entails a corresponding degree of *responsibility*. The universality of natural law does not destroy ethics nor the basis of ethics; on the contrary, it places morality upon a natural, causal, understandable basis. Furthermore, it leads to a more rational view of human behavior and to a more sympathetic attitude toward the criminal or the offender. As long as men regarded non-ethical conduct as the result of absolutely free will, or of an evil spirit within man, it was logical enough to exorcise the demon by torture and in general to "make the punishment fit the crime" rather than make it fit the criminal. But an understanding of the fact that non-ethical conduct is causal rather than capricious and is the result of natural rather than supernatural causation leads society to look for and to correct these causes rather than to seek vengeance or retribution. Indeed, the only justification for punishment of any kind is the correction of the offender or the protection of society; there is no longer any place in civilized society or in a rational theology for retributive or expiatory punishment.

A study of human history and pre-history shows that there has been a wonderful development of ethics and of religion. There is no satisfactory evidence that these were handed down from heaven in perfect form, but there is abundant evidence that they, in common with all other things, have been evolving and that this process has not yet come to an end. Much of the ethics and religion of the Old Testament was condemned by Christ and would not be tolerated in civilized society to-day. Some of the ethical codes and religious practises current to-day will probably be considered barbarous in times to come.

Variations and mutations are the materials of the evolutionary process and they occur in all possible directions; some of them are progressive, many are retrogressive, but only those that are fit survive. The present is apparently a period of great social,

ethical, and religious mutation, and many of these are certainly retrogressive; but let us hope that the decent instincts and the common sense of mankind will see to it that these retrogressive mutations do not survive.

Whatever the ultimate basis of ethics may be, whether divine commands, intuitions and instincts, utility or pleasure, the content remains essentially the same: however much codes and practises may change, our ideals and instincts remain much the same from age to age. Whether written on tables of stone or on the tables of our hearts, the "cardinal virtues" are still virtues and the "deadly sins" are still sins. The deepest instincts of human nature cry out for justice, truth, beauty, sympathy. Ethics that is based on pleasures of the highest and most enduring sort, on pleasures of the rational mind, the better instincts, refined senses, is not different from the ethics of the divine command to "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." These are "the enduring satisfactions of life." The new ethics of science does not essentially differ in content from the old ethics of revelation, and the commandments of a God within are no less binding than those of a God without.

Nevertheless, the decline of faith in the supernatural origin of man and of ethics, the decreasing fear of hell or hope of heaven, and the increased freedom of thought and action brought about by science and education have led, in some instances, to a general weakening of the ethical code. When increasing freedom carries with it an increasing sense of responsibility and duty it never endangers progress, but when liberty degenerates into license it marks the beginning of social and moral decay. Freedom is one of the principal goals of human endeavor, but the best use man can make of his freedom is to place limitations upon it. We can be safely freed from external restraints only in so far as we replace these by internal inhibitions.

Partly as a result of this increased freedom from the old restraints, but largely as one of the terrible aftermaths of the World War, lawlessness, immorality, and selfishness seem to be

more than usually evident throughout the world to-day. The war gave social sanction to murder, arson, and theft; it unchanged the wild beasts in men that long had been restrained; it glorified acts which in times of peace would have been abhorred; and it is no wonder that we are now reaping the whirlwind. Grafters in high office and bandits in high-powered cars are preying on society. Lawlessness and selfishness are widespread. Social solidarity has diminished; races and nations are suspicious or antagonistic; many political parties, churches, labor-unions, social classes are split up into warring factions. Jealousy, suspicion, intolerance, hate, and war are preached from some pulpits and from many platforms and presses. The war that we fondly hoped was to end wars, has apparently only ended peace.

The new freedom which recently has come to women, and which is in the main a progressive change, has led to some bizarre views in these later days. Some of its radical advocates are demanding that it shall mean freedom from all sex distinctions and restraints, except such as are purely personal and voluntary—freedom from marriage and reproduction and the care of children; abolition of the family with its cares and responsibilities; state subsidies for such women as are willing to be mothers and state infantoria for the rearing of all children. Less extreme and therefore more dangerous tendencies are seen in the acceptance of pleasure as the sole basis of ethics and the interpretation of the ethics of pleasure as the satisfaction of animal appetites for food, drink, and sex. The reaction from undue sex repression has led to the opposite extreme of sex exploitation. Obscene literature and plays are not only tolerated but justified and patronized by many leaders of public opinion. In several universities student publications have been suppressed recently by the authorities because of indecency or blasphemy. Free love, trial marriage, easy divorce are widely preached and practised. We vigorously condemn and forbid polygamy in Utah but easily condone worse practises nearer home. The question of the old catechism, "What

is the chief end of man?" is now answered by multitudes of people: "To glorify pleasure and enjoy it while it lasts." They say frankly: "I have but one life to live and I propose to get the most pleasure possible out of it. Why should I think of social progress or of posterity? What has posterity done for me? Let us eat, drink, and be merry—for to-morrow we die." Yes, persons who live as mere animals die as the beast dieth; they deserve no immortality on earth or anywhere else. Whether we believe in religion or not, our better instincts revolt against such ethics. We are more than brutes and cannot be satisfied with the pleasures of brutes. We may not accept the old ethics of supernaturalism and tradition, but we cannot adopt the ethics of pigs and hyenas.

III. What is the remedy for this condition? Fundamentalists think that science in general, biology in particular, and the theory of human evolution most of all are responsible. They would, therefore, prescribe by law that the latter may not be taught in tax-supported institutions. But if state legislatures are to decide that evolution shall not be taught, they should also eliminate the teaching of all subjects which furnish evidences of the truth of evolution; they should forbid the teaching of morphology, physiology, ecology, paleontology, genetics, comparative medicine, comparative psychology, and sociology. Indeed, there are few subjects that are now studied and taught by comparative and genetic methods that should not be banned. If the farmers of Tennessee and Kentucky can decide what may be taught in biology, they can also decide what may be taught in mathematics, as indeed one sufferer from interminable decimals proposed when he introduced a bill to fix by law the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a circle at exactly 3.

I have been assured by persons who are very orthodox in faith but very heterodox in spelling and grammar, that "Evolution is all rot"; that it is "leprocy" (sic); that "the heads of evolutionists are full of mud" (their own, of course, being full of "monkey"); and that "God hath chosen the fools of this

world to confound the wise," leaving it in doubt as to who is which. Mr. Bryan's characterization of scientists as "dishonest scoundrels" shows the same unrestrained emotionalism as the antivivisectionists show when they call animal experimenters "inhuman fiends." Antievolution, antivivisection, antivaccination, and antiscience are all the outgrowths of extreme emotionalism, recklessness in handling facts, and an utter ignorance of the value of scientific evidence.

Fundamentalism, if logical, would demand the abolition of the teaching of all science and scientific methods, for science in general and not merely the theory of evolution is responsible for the loss of faith in the old traditions. It is folly to attempt to promote education and science and at the same time to forbid the teaching of the principal methods and results of science. The only sensible course would be to abolish altogether the teaching of science and scientific methods and to return to ecclesiasticism. The Church once told scientists what they could think and teach, and now state legislatures propose to do it. Such methods of resisting change have always failed in the past and are foredoomed to failure now.

The real problem that confronts us, and it is a great problem, is how to adjust religion to science, faith to knowledge, ideality to reality, for adjustment in the reverse direction will never happen. Facts cannot be eliminated by ideals and it is too late in the history of the world to attempt to refute the findings of science by sentimental objections or supposed theological difficulties. If science makes mistakes, science must furnish the cure; it can never be done by church councils, state legislatures, nor even by popular vote.

The only possible remedy for the present deplorable condition is not less but more and better science and education; science that recognizes that the search for truth is not the whole of life, that both scientific reality and religious ideality are necessary to normal, happy, useful living. We must keep our feet on the ground of fact and science, but lift our heads into the

atmosphere of ideals. "To the solid ground of Nature trusts the mind that builds for aye." Education from the earliest years must teach love rather than hate, human brotherhood rather than war, service rather than selfishness; it must develop good habits of body and mind; it must instil reverence, not only for truth but also for beauty and righteousness.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." Man cannot live by bread alone; he must have ideals and aspirations, faith and hope and love. In short, he must have a religion. The world never needed a religion of high ideals and aspirations more than it needs it now. But the old religion of literalism and of slavish regard to the authority of church or book, while well suited to some minds, cannot serve the needs of those who have breathed the air of science. Must all such be deprived of the benefits of a religion which they need and be forced into a false position of antagonism to religion as a whole because they cannot accept all the literalism, infantilism, and incidentalism of so-called fundamentalism? The fundamentalists, rather than the scientists, are helping to make this an irreligious age.

IV. Science has destroyed many old traditions but it has not destroyed the foundations of ethics or religion. In some respects it has contributed greatly to these foundations:

1. The universality of natural law has not destroyed faith in God, though it has modified many primitive conceptions of deity. This is a universe of ends as well as of means, of teleology as well as of mechanism. Mechanism is universal but so also is finalism. It is incredible that the system and order of nature, the evolution of matter and worlds and life, of man and consciousness and spiritual ideals are all the results of chance. The greatest exponents of evolution, such as Darwin, Huxley, Asa Gray, and Weismann, have maintained that there is evidence of some governance and plan in Nature. This is the fundamental article of all religious faith. If there is no purpose in the universe, or in evolution, or in man, then indeed there is no God and no good. But if there is purpose in nature and in human life, it is only the

imperfection of our mental vision that leads us sometimes to cry in despair: "Vanitas vanitatum, all is vanity." No one can furnish scientific proof of the existence or nature of God, but atheism leads to pessimism and despair, while theism leads to faith and hope. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

2. Science leaves us faith in the worth and dignity of man. In spite of weakness and imperfection, man is the highest product of a billion years of evolution. We are still children in the morning of time, but we are attaining reason, freedom, spirituality. The ethics of mankind is not the ethics of the jungle or the barnyard. In the new dispensation men will no longer be restrained from evil by fear of hell or hope of heaven, but by their decent instincts and their high ideals. When love of truth, beauty, goodness, of wife, children, humanity, dies in us our doom will be sealed. But it will not die in all men; the long-past course of progressive evolution proves that it will live on, somewhere and somehow.

3. Science leaves us hope for the future. Present conditions often seem desperate; pessimists tell us that society is disintegrating, that there will never be a League of Nations, that wars will never cease, that the human race is degenerating, and that our civilization is going the way of ancient Egypt, Assyria, Greece, and Rome. But though nations have risen and fallen, and cultures have waxed and waned, the major movements of human history have been forward. After civilization had once been attained, it never completely disappeared from the earth. The torch of culture was handed on from Egypt to Greece and from Greece to Rome, and from all of these to us. One often hears of lost arts and civilizations of the past, but the best elements of any culture are immortal.

The test of biological variations and mutations is whether they lead to increasing fitness, and the test of all social and moral mutations and revolutions, such as those of to-day, is whether they lead to increasing perfection and progress. The great principle of the survival of the fit has guided evolution from amœba

to man, from tropisms and reflexes to intelligence and consciousness, from solitary individuals to social organizations, from instincts to ethics, and this great principle will not be abrogated to-day or to-morrow. It is the "power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness." Man can consciously hasten or hinder this process, but he cannot permanently destroy it. He can refuse to take part in it and can choose to be eliminated, but in the past course of evolution for millions of years indicates that somewhere and somehow this process will go on.

The evolutionist is an incorrigible optimist; he reviews a billion years of evolution in the past and looks forward to perhaps another billion years of evolution in the future. He knows that evolution has not always been progressive; that there have been many eddies and back currents, and that the main current has sometimes meandered in many directions; and yet he knows that, on the whole, it has moved forward. Through all the ages evolution has been leading toward the wider intellectual horizons, the broader social outlooks, the more invigorating moral atmosphere of the great sea of truth.

What progress in body, mind, and society; what inventions, institutions, even relations with other worlds, the future may hold in store, it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. What does it matter if some men refuse to join this great march onward, what does it matter if even our species should become extinct if only it give place to a better species! Our deepest instincts are for growth; the joy of life is progress. Only this would make immortality endurable. Human progress depends upon the increase and diffusion among men of both knowledge and ethics, reality and ideality, science and religion. Now for the first time in the history of life on this planet, a species can consciously and rationally take part in its own evolution. To us the inestimable privilege is given to cooperate in this greatest work of time, to have part in the triumphs of future ages. What other aim is so worthy of high endeavor and great endowment?

ON FRIENDSHIP *

A. Clutton-Brock

(A. Clutton-Brock is an English art critic who was coming into prominence during the war as a writer of reflective essays upon religion in modern England. He has since died. And he was not really of our age. Our art critics do not often turn moralists, less often in America than in England. So this serene little essay that follows has not many competitors among our modern essays. It is neither garrulous nor intimate, although its theme implies in the author at least the latter quality. Rather does it follow the manner of the great Victorians and their predecessors of classical times. The dignity of Arnold, the serenity of Cicero in his old age, and the benevolence of Aurelius are its forebears. But perhaps it reminds most of Emerson, who has written an essay on the same subject in the same idealistic vein. Emerson's essay has more memorable sentences, but one may doubt if it is written in a more coherent way. And in a theme which Plato, who first celebrated it, found to possess an elusive depth of mysticism, a coherent development is not to be despised. For friendship, we are told, arises from the spontaneous working of instinct; it is a natural affinity between two personalities; and if the instinct functions properly, a conscious judgment upon the worth of our friend no more than his worldly prosperity or failure can shake or change it.)

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ON FRIENDSHIP

FRIENDSHIP is above reason, for, though you find virtues in a friend, he was your friend before you found them. It is a gift that we offer because we must; to give it as the reward of virtue would be to set a price upon it, and those who do that have no friendship to give. If you choose your friends on the ground that you are virtuous and want virtuous company, you are no nearer to true friendship than if you choose them for commercial reasons. Besides, who are you that you should be setting a price upon your friendship? It is enough for any man that he has the divine power of making friends, and he must leave it to that power to determine who his friends shall be. For, though you may choose the virtuous to be your friends, they may not choose you; indeed, friendship cannot grow where there is any calculated choice. It comes, like sleep, when you are not thinking about it; and you should be grateful without any misgiving, when it comes.

So no man who knows what friendship is ever gave up a friend because he turns out to be disreputable. His only reason for giving up a friend is that he has ceased to care for him; and, when that happens, he should reproach himself for this mortal poverty of affection, not the friend for having proved unworthy. For it is inhuman presumption to say of any man that he is unworthy of your friendship, just as it is to say of any woman, when you have fallen out of love with her, that she is unworthy of your love. In friendship and in love we are always humble, because we see that a free gift has been given to us; and to lose that humility because we have lost friendship or love is to take a pride in what should shame us.

We have our judgments and our penalties as part of the political mechanism that is forced upon us so that we may continue to live; but friendship is not friendship at all unless it teaches us that these are not part of our real life. They have to be; and we pay men, and clothe them in wigs and scarlet, to sit in judgment on other men. So we are tempted to play this game of judgment ourselves, even though no one has paid us to do it. It is only in the warmth of friendship that we see how cold a thing it is to judge and how stupid to take a pleasure in judging; for we recognize this warmth as a positive good, a richness in our natures, while the coldness that sets us judging is a poverty. Just as our criticism of a work of art begins only when we have ceased to experience it, so our criticism of our friends begins only when we have ceased to experience them, when our minds can no longer remain at the height of intimacy. But this criticism is harmless if we know it for what it is, merely the natural reaction, the cold fit that comes after the warm, and if we do not suppose that our coldness is wiser than our warmth.

There are men who cannot be friends except when they are under an illusion that their friends are perfect, and when the illusion passes there is an end of their friendship. But true friendship has no illusions, for it reaches to that part of a man's nature that is beyond his imperfections, and in doing so it takes all of them for granted. It does not even assume that he is better than other men, for there is egotism in assuming that. A man is your friend, not because of his superiorities, but because there is something open from your nature to his, a way that is closed between you and most men. You and he understand each other, as the phrase is: your relation with him is a rare success among a multitude of failures, and if you are proud of the success you should be ashamed of the failure.

There is nothing so fatal to friendship as this egotism of accounting for it by some superiority in the friend. If you do that you will become a member of a set, all, in their assertion of each others' merits, implying their own, and all uneasy lest

they are giving more than they get. For if you insist upon the virtues of your friend, you expect him to insist upon your virtues, and there is a competition between you which makes friendship a burden rather than a rest. Criticism then becomes a treachery, for it implies that you are beginning to doubt those superiorities upon which your friendship is supposed to be based. But when no superiorities are assumed, criticism is only the exercise of a natural curiosity. It is because a man is your friend, and you like him so much and know him so well, that you are curious about him. You are in fact an expert upon him, and like to show your expert knowledge. And you are an expert because in the warmth of friendship his disguises melt away from him, and he shows himself to you just as he is. Indeed, that is the test of friendship and the delight of it, that because we are no longer afraid of being thought worse than we are we do not try to seem better. We know that it is not our virtues that have won us friendship, and we do not fear to lose it through our vices. We have reached that blessed state of being nearer to heaven than anything else in this life, in which affection does not depend upon judgment; and we are like gods, who have no need even to forgive, because they know. It is a rare state, and never attained to in its perfection. We can approach it only if we know what friendship is and really desire it, and especially if we admire the man who is a friend without ever wondering at his choice of friends or blaming him for his faithfulness to them, whatever evil they may do.

A RELIC *

MAX BEERBOHM

(One always thinks of Max Beerbohm as a young man. Yet he was born in London in 1872, and was graduated from Merton College at Oxford just in time to arrive once more in London when the mid-nineties were advertising the end of the century. The phrase meant, of course, to Aubrey Beardsley and his satellites, the emergence of a new "period," which under their conspicuously esthetic leadership should be quite free from the namby-pamby morality of Victorianism. Max Beerbohm was too self-critical, perhaps too shy, for leadership in *fin-de-siècle*-ism. But he was young, and the movement was impregnated with the irrepressible gaiety, even in satire, of young men. And "the incomparable Max," who is one of the few survivors of a group of men who died young, has carried on into the heart of a new century their vivacious criticism of a world which appeared so easily comprehensible to a writer of parts.

The years have softened the mannerisms, which were as conspicuous as the satire, of his first book, called with the nonchalant egotism of the group, *The Works of Max Beerbohm* (1896). They have brought ease and grace to a style that had been labored and self-conscious. They have deepened the quality of his satire, though they have not succeeded in souring it. And they have multiplied the media for its expression. Max Beerbohm's more recent works have been pictorial, rather than verbal. Perhaps he will be longest remembered for his caricatures of British personalities in politics and in letters, from his resuscitation of *Rossetti and his Circle* down to his contemporary portraits of

* From *And Even Now.* E. P. Dutton & Co., 1921.

Lloyd George and the Prince of Wales. In the realm of prose, meanwhile, he had parodied the conscientious style of Henry James and that of other writers in *A Christmas Garland* (1912). He has, besides, written several volumes of light essays (*More,* 1899, *Yet Again,* 1900, *And Even Now,* 1924), in which in his courtly but intimate manner he has given us his views on such themes as the boredom of taking a walk, the perils of studying French, and the wrong way to answer a letter.

Yet satirists are but men. And beneath their forbidding exterior, there frequently lies hidden even more of sentiment than is found in the rest of us. In 1911 Max did not hesitate to give us a love story in an Oxford setting. *Zuleika Dobson* is redolent of that ecstatic adoration of the fairer sex and that delight in the flashing robes which only dukes may wear, that amused a former generation in the novels of Disraeli. The selection included here finds him in the same rare mood. Only, herein he reminisces over an incident, long forgotten, a quarrel between two middle-aged lovers in a café in Normandy. He had once thought of writing it up into a short story after the manner of de Maupassant. And the interest of the essay comes in part from the fact that it shows us the way in which the mind of a writer weaves a plot out of the loose strands of some insignificant episode that has caught his eye.)

A RELIC

YESTERDAY I found in a cupboard an old, small, battered portmanteau which, by the initials on it, I recognised as my own property. The lock appeared to have been forced. I dimly remembered having forced it myself, with a poker, in my hot youth, after some journey in which I had lost the key; and this act of violence was probably the reason why the trunk had so long ago ceased to travel. I unstrapped it, not without dust; it exhaled the faint scent of its long closure; it contained a tweed suit of Late Victorian pattern, some bills, some letters, a collar-stud, and—something which, after I had wondered for a moment or two what on earth it was, caused me suddenly to murmur, "Down below, the sea rustled to and fro over the shingle."

Strange that these words had, year after long year, been existing in some obscure cell at the back of my brain!—forgotten but all the while existing, like the trunk in that cupboard. What released them, what threw open the cell door, was nothing but the fragment of a fan; just the butt-end of an inexpensive fan. The sticks are of white bone, clipped together with a semicircular ring that is not silver. They are neatly oval at the base, but variously jagged at the other end. The longest of them measures perhaps two inches. Ring and all, they have no market value; for a farthing is the least coin in our currency. And yet, though I had so long forgotten them, for me they are not worthless. They touch a chord. . . . Lest this confession raise false hopes in the reader, I add that I did not know their owner.

I did once see her, and in Normandy, and by moonlight, and her name was Angélique. She was graceful, she was even beautiful. I was but nineteen years old. Yet even so I cannot say that she impressed me favorably. I was seated at a table of a café on

the terrace of a casino. I sat facing the sea, with my back to the casino. I sat listening to the quiet sea, which I had crossed that morning. The hour was late, there were few people about. I heard the swing-door behind me flap open, and was aware of a sharp snapping and crackling sound as a lady in white passed quickly by me. I stared at her erect thin back and her agitated elbows. A short fat man passed in pursuit of her—an elderly man in a black alpaca jacket that billowed. I saw that she had left a trail of little white things on the asphalt. I watched the efforts of the agonized short fat man to overtake her as she swept wraith-like away to the distant end of the terrace. What was the matter? What had made her so spectacularly angry with him? The three or four waiters of the café were exchanging cynical smiles and shrugs, as waiters will. I tried to feel cynical, but was thrilled with excitement, with wonder and curiosity. The woman out yonder had doubled on her tracks. She had not slackened her furious speed, but the man waddlingly contrived to keep pace with her now. With every moment they became more distinct, and the prospect that they would presently pass by me, back into the casino, gave me that physical tension which one feels on a wayside platform at the imminent passing of an express. In the rushingly enlarged vision I had of them, the wrath on the woman's face was even more saliently the main thing than I had supposed it would be. That very hard Parisian face must have been as white as the powder that coated it. "Écoute, Angélique," gasped the perspiring bourgeois, "écoute, je te supplie—" The swing-door received them and was left swinging to and fro. I wanted to follow, but had not paid for my bock. I beckoned my waiter. On his way to me he stooped down and picked up something which, with a smile and a shrug, he laid on my table: "Il semble que Mademoiselle ne s'en servira plus." This is the thing I now write of, and at sight of it I understood why there had been that snapping and crackling, and what the white fragments on the ground were.

I hurried through the rooms, hoping to see a continuation of

that drama—a scene of appeasement, perhaps, or of fury still implacable. But the two oddly-assorted players were not performing there. My waiter had told me he had not seen either of them before. I suppose they had arrived that day. But I was not destined to see either of them again. They went away, I suppose, next morning; jointly or singly; singly, I imagine.

They made, however, a prolonged stay in my young memory, and would have done so even had I not had that tangible memento of them. Who were they, those two of whom that one strange glimpse had befallen me? What, I wondered, was the previous history of each? What, in particular, had all that tragic pother been about? Mlle. Angélique I guessed to be thirty years old, her friend perhaps fifty-five. Each of their faces was as clear to me as in the moment of actual vision—the man's fat shiny bewildered face; the taut white face of the woman, the hard red line of her mouth, the eyes that were not flashing, but positively dull, with rage. I presumed that the fan had been a present from him, and a recent present—bought perhaps that very day, after their arrival in the town. But what, *what* had he done that she should break it between her hands, scattering the splinters as who should sow dragon's teeth? I could not believe he had done anything much amiss. I imagined her grievance a trivial one. But this did not make the case less engrossing. Again and again I would take the fan-stump from my pocket, examining it on the palm of my hand, or between finger and thumb, hoping to read the mystery it had been mixed up in, so that I might reveal that mystery to the world. To the world, yes; nothing less than that. I was determined to make a story of what I had seen—a *conte* in the manner of great Guy de Maupassant. Now and again, in the course of the past year or so, it had occurred to me that I might be a writer. But I had not felt the impulse to sit down and write something. I did feel that impulse now. It would indeed have been an irresistible impulse if I had known just what to write.

I felt I might know at any moment, and had but to give my

mind to it. Maupassant was an impeccable artist, but I think the secret of the hold he had on the young men of my day was not so much that we discerned his cunning as that we delighted in the simplicity which his cunning achieved. I had read a great number of his short stories, but none that had made me feel as though I, if I were a writer, mightn't have written it myself. Maupassant had an European reputation. It was pleasing, it was soothing and gratifying, to feel that one could at any time win an equal fame if one chose to set pen to paper. And now, suddenly, the spring had been touched in me, the time was come. I was grateful for the fluke by which I had witnessed on the terrace that evocative scene. I looked forward to reading the MS. of "The Fan"—to-morrow, at latest. I was not wildly ambitious. I was not inordinately vain. I knew I couldn't ever, with the best will in the world, write like Mr. George Meredith. Those wondrous works of his, seething with wit, with poetry and philosophy and what not, never had beguiled me with the sense that I might do something similar. I had full consciousness of not being a philosopher, of not being a poet, and of not being a wit. Well, Maupassant was none of these things. He was just an observer like me. Of course he was a good deal older than I, and had observed a good deal more. But it seemed to me that he was not my superior in knowledge of life. I knew all about life through *him*.

Dimly, the initial paragraph of my tale floated in my mind. I—not exactly I myself, but rather that impersonal *je* familiar to me through Maupassant—was to be sitting at that table, with a bock before me, just as I *had* sat. Four or five short sentences would give the whole scene. One of these I had quite definitely composed. You have already heard it. "Down below, the sea rustled to and fro over the shingle."

These words, which pleased me much, were to do double duty. They were to recur. They were to be, by a fine stroke, the very last words of my tale, their tranquillity striking a sharp ironic contrast with the stress of what had just been narrated. I had,

you see, advanced further in the form of my tale than in the substance. But even the form was as yet vague. What, exactly, was to happen after Mlle. Angélique and M. Joumand (as I provisionally called him) had rushed back past me into the casino? It was clear that I must hear the whole inner history from the lips of one or the other of them. Which? Should M. Joumand stagger out on to the terrace, sit down heavily at the table next to mine, bury his head in his hands, and presently, in broken words, blurt out to me all that might be of interest? . . .

" 'And I tell you I gave up everything for her—everything.' He stared at me with his old hopeless eyes. 'She is more than the fiend I have described to you. Yet I swear to you, monsieur, that if I had anything left to give, it should be hers.'

"Down below, the sea rustled to and fro over the shingle."

Or should the lady herself be my informant? For a while, I rather leaned to this alternative. It was more exciting, it seemed to make the writer more signally a man of the world. On the other hand, it was less simple to manage. Wronged persons might be ever so communicative, but I surmised that persons in the wrong were reticent. Mlle. Angélique, therefore, would have to be modified by me in appearance and behavior, toned down, touched up; and poor M. Joumand must look like a man of whom one could believe anything. . . .

"She ceased speaking. She gazed down at the fragments of her fan, and then, as though finding in them an image of her own life, whispered, 'To think what I once was, monsieur!—what, but for him, I might be, even now!' She buried her face in her hands, then stared out into the night. Suddenly she uttered a short, harsh laugh.

"Down below, the sea rustled to and fro over the shingle."

I decided that I must choose the first of these two ways. It was the less chivalrous as well as the less lurid way, but clearly it was the more artistic as well as the easier. The "chose vue," the "tranche de la vie"—this was the thing to aim at. Honesty

was the best policy. I must be nothing if not merciless. Maupassant was nothing if not merciless. He would not have spared Mlle. Angélique. Besides, why should I libel M. Joumand? Poor —no, not *poor* M. Joumand! I warned myself against pitying him. One touch of "sentimentality," and I should be lost. M. Joumand was ridiculous. I must keep him so. But—what was his position in life? Was he a lawyer perhaps?—or the proprietor of a shop in the Rue de Rivoli? I toyed with the possibility that he kept a fan shop—that the business had once been a prosperous one, but had gone down, down, because of his infatuation for this woman to whom he was always giving fans—which she *always* smashed. . . . " 'Ah, monsieur, cruel and ungrateful to me though she is, I swear to you that if I had anything left to give, it should be hers; but,' he stared at me with his old hopeless eyes, 'the fan she broke to-night was the last—the last, monsieur—of my stock.' Down below,"—but I pulled myself together, and asked pardon of my Muse.

It may be that I had offended her by my fooling. Or it may be that she had a sisterly desire to shield Mlle. Angélique from my mordant art. Or it may be that she was bent on saving M. de Maupassant from a dangerous rivalry. Anyway, she withheld from me the inspiration I had so confidently solicited. I *could not* think what had led up to that scene on the terrace. I tried hard and soberly. I turned the "chose vue" over and over in my mind, day by day, and the fan-stump over and over in my hand. But the "chose à figurer"—what, oh what, was that? Nightly I revisited the café, and sat there with an open mind—a mind wide-open to catch the idea that should drop into it like a ripe golden plum. The plum did not ripen. The mind remained wide-open for a week or more, but nothing except that phrase about the sea rustled to and fro in it.

A full quarter of a century has gone by. M. Joumand's death, so far too fat was he all those years ago, may be presumed. A temper so violent as Mlle. Angélique's must surely have brought its owner to the grave, long since. But here, all unchanged, the

stump of her fan is; and once more I turn it over and over in my hand, not learning its secret—no, nor even trying to, now. The chord this relic strikes in me is not one of curiosity as to that old quarrel, but (if you will forgive me) one of tenderness for my first effort to write, and for my first hopes of excellence.

THE CHEERFUL BREAKFAST TABLE*

MEREDITH NICHOLSON

(Meredith Nicholson was born at Crawfordsville, Indiana, in 1866. He was educated in the public schools of Indianapolis and in Wabash College, where he received an honorary A.M. degree in 1901. He is the author of many novels, among which *The House of a Thousand Candles*, *The Port of Missing Men*, and *The Hope of Happiness* are well known. Several volumes of essays reveal him to be interested in American life and in his own Middle West, of which he is an excellent interpreter.

The chatty amiability of the essay here included should not blind the reader to its really serious import. Not in itself but as a symbol of a normal and healthy life, breakfast is seen to be important. Do we greet the day with renewed energy and sharpened senses, with a freshened sense of the endless adventure of life? Moreover how does the family figure at the breakfast table? Have the habits of modern life served to destroy in part the family as a closely knit institution and a civilizing factor in the life of its members? Is it not worth while for us to ask ourselves what benefits are to be derived from a cheerful breakfast table with all the members of the family present?)

* From *The Man in the Street*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

THE CHEERFUL BREAKFAST TABLE

"A good, honest, wholesome, hungry breakfast."
—*The Compleat Angler.*

"One fine morning in the full London season, Major Arthur Pendennis came over from his lodgings, according to his custom, to breakfast at a certain club in Pall Mall, of which he was a chief ornament." This has always seemed to me the noblest possible opening for a tale. The zest of a fine morning in London, the deliberation of a gentleman taking his ease in his club and fortifying himself against the day's events with a satisfying breakfast, are communicated to the reader in a manner that at once inspires confidence and arouses the liveliest expectations. I shall not go the length of saying that all novels should begin with breakfast, but where the disclosures are to be of moment, and we are to be urged upon adventures calculated to tax our emotions or our staying powers, a breakfast table serves admirably as a point of departure. We thus begin the imaginary day where the natural day begins, and we form the acquaintance of the characters at an hour when human nature is most satisfactorily and profitably studied.

It is only a superstition that night alone affords the proper atmosphere for romance, and that the curtain must fall upon the first scene with the dead face of the king's messenger upturned to the moon and the landlord bawling from an upper window to know what it's all about. Morning is the beginning of all things. Its hours breathe life and hope. "Pistols and coffee!" The phrase whets the appetite both for the encounter and the cheering cup. The duel, to be sure, is no longer in favor, and it is not for me to lament its passing; but I mention

it as an affair of dewy mornings, indelibly associated with hours when the hand is steady and courage runs high.

It may be said with all assurance that breakfast has fallen into sad neglect, due to the haste and rush of modern life—the commuter's anxiety touching the 8.27, the city man's fear that he may not be able to absorb the day's news before his car is at the door. Breakfast has become a negligible item of the day's schedule. An increasing number of American citizens are unfit to be seen at the breakfast hour; and a man, woman, or child who cannot present a cheery countenance at breakfast is living an unhealthy life upon the brink of disaster. A hasty visit to the table, the gulping of coffee, the vicious snapping of teeth upon food scarcely looked at, and a wild rush to keep the first appointment noted on the calendar, is the poorest possible preparation for a day of honest work. The man who follows this practice is a terror to his business assccíates. Reports that "the boss isn't feeling well this morning" pass about the office, with a disturbance of the morale that does not make for the efficiency of the establishment. The wife who reaches the table disheveled and fretful, under compulsion of her conscience, with the idea that the lord of the house should not be permitted to fare forth without her benediction, would do better to keep her bed. If the eggs are overdone or the coffee is cold and flavorless, her panicky entrance at the last moment will not save the situation. A growl from behind the screening newspaper is a poor return for her wifely self-denial, but she deserves it. There is guilt upon her soul; if she had not insisted on taking the Smiths to supper after the theater the night before, he would have got the amount of sleep essential to his well-being and the curtaining paper would not be camouflaging a face to which the good-by kiss at the front door is an affront, not a caress.

"Have the children come down yet?" the lone breakfaster growlingly demands. The maid replies indifferently that the children have severally and separately partaken of their porridge and departed. Her manner of imparting this informa-

tion signifies rebellion against a system which makes necessary the repeated offering of breakfast to persons who accept only that they may complain of it. No happier is the matutinal meal in humbler establishments where the wife prepares and serves the food, and buttons up Susie's clothes or sews a button on Johnny's jacket while the kettle boils. If the husband met a bootlegger in the alley the previous night it is the wife's disagreeable duty to rouse him from his protracted slumbers; and if, when she has produced him at the table, he is displeased with the menu, his resentment, unchecked by those restraints presupposed of a higher culture, is manifested in the playful distribution of the tableware in the general direction of wife and offspring. The family cluster fearfully at the door as the head of the house, with surly resignation, departs for the scene of his daily servitude with the smoke of his pipe trailing behind him, animated by no love for the human race but only by a firm resolution not to lift his hand until the last echoes of the whistle have died away.

It is foreign to my purpose to indict a whole profession, much less the medical fraternity, which is so sadly harassed by a generation of Americans who demand in pills and serums what its progenitors found in the plough handle and the axe, and yet I cannot refrain from laying at the doors of the doctors some burden of responsibility for the destruction of the breakfast table. The astute and diplomatic physician, perfectly aware that he is dealing with an outraged stomach and that the internal discomfort is due to overindulgence, is nevertheless anxious to impose the slightest tax upon the patient's self-denial. Breakfast, he reflects, is no great shakes anyhow, and he suggests that it be curtailed, or prescribes creamless coffee or offers some other hint equally banal. This is wholly satisfactory to Jones, who says with a sigh of relief that he never cared much for breakfast, and that he can very easily do without it.

About twenty-five years ago some one started a boom for the breakfastless day as conducive to longevity. I know persons who

have clung stubbornly to this absurdity. The despicable habit contributes to domestic unsociability and is, I am convinced by my own experiments, detrimental to health. The chief business of the world is transacted in the morning hours, and I am reluctant to believe that it is most successfully done on empty stomachs. Fasting as a spiritual discipline is, of course, quite another thing; but fasting by a tired business man under medical compulsion can hardly be lifted to the plane of things spiritual. To delete breakfast from the day's program is sheer cowardice, a confession of invalidism which is well calculated to reduce the powers of resistance. The man who begins the day with a proscription that sets him apart from his neighbors may venture into the open jauntily, persuading himself that his abstinence proves his superior qualities; but in his heart, to say nothing of his stomach, he knows that he has been guilty of a sneaking evasion. If he were a normal, healthy being, he would not be skulking out of the house breakfastless. Early rising, a prompt response to the breakfast-bell, a joyous breaking of the night's fast is a rite not to be despised in civilized homes.

Old age rises early and calls for breakfast and the day's news. Grandfather is entitled to his breakfast at any hour he demands it. He is at an age when every hour stolen from the night is fairly plucked from oblivion, and to offer him breakfast in bed as more convenient to the household, or with a well-meant intention of easing the day for him, is merely to wound his feelings. There is something finely appealing in the thought of a veteran campaigner in the army of life who doesn't wait for the bugle to sound reveille, but kindles his fire and eats his ration before his young comrades are awake.

The failure of breakfast, its growing ill repute and disfavor are not, however, wholly attributable to the imperfections of our social or economic system. There is no more reason why the homes of the humble should be illumined by a happy breakfast table than that the morning scene in abodes of comfort and luxury should express cheer and a confident faith in human destiny.

Snobbishness must not enter into this matter of breakfast reform; rich and poor alike must be persuaded that the morning meal is deserving of all respect, that it is the first act of the day's drama, not to be performed in a slipshod fashion to spoil the rest of the play. It is the first chapter of a story, and every one who has dallied with the art of fiction knows that not merely the first chapter but the first line must stir the reader's imagination.

It is a common complaint of restrospective elderly persons that the family life, as our grandparents knew it, has been destroyed by the haste and worry incident to modern conditions. Breakfast—a leisurely, jolly affair as I would have it, with every member of the household present on the stroke of the gong—is unequalled as a unifying force. The plea that everybody is in a hurry in the morning is no excuse; if there is any hour when haste is unprofitable it is that first morning hour.

A day should not be "jumped into," but approached tranquilly and with respect and enlivened by every element of joy that can be communicated to it. At noon we are in the midst of conflict; at nightfall we have won or lost battles; but in the morning "all is possible and all unknown." If we have slept like honest folk, and are not afraid of a dash of cold water, we meet the day blithely and with high expectation. If the day dawn brightly, there is good reason for sharing its promise with those who live under the same roof; if it be dark and rain beats upon the pane, even greater is the need of family communion, that every member may be strengthened for valiant wrestling with the day's tasks.

As against the tendency, so destructive of good health and mental and moral efficiency, to slight breakfast, the food manufacturers have set themselves with praiseworthy determination to preserve and dignify the meal. One has but to peruse the advertising pages of the periodicals to learn of the many tempting preparations that are offered to grace the breakfast table. The obtuse, inured to hasty snatches, nibbles, and sips, are assisted to a proper appreciation of these preparations by the most en-

chanting illustrations. The art of publicity has spent itself lavishly to lure the world to an orderly and contemplative breakfast with an infinite variety of cereals that have been subjected to processes which make them a boon to mankind. When I hear of an addition to the long list, I fly at once to the grocer to obtain one of the crisp packages, and hurry home to deposit it with the cook for early experiment. The adventurous sense is roused not only by the seductive advertisement but by the neatness of the container, the ears of corn or the wheat sheaf so vividly depicted on the wrapper, or the contagious smile of a radiant child brandishing a spoon and demanding more.

Only a slouchy and unimaginative housewife will repeat monotonously a breakfast schedule. A wise rotation, a continual surprise in the food offered, does much to brighten the table. The damnable iteration of ham and eggs has cracked the pillars of many a happy home. There should be no ground for cavil; the various items should not only be well-chosen, but each dish should be fashioned as for a feast of high ceremony. Gluttony is a grievous sin; breakfast, I repeat, should be a spiritual repast. If fruit is all that the soul craves, well enough; but let it be of paradisaical perfection. If coffee and a roll satisfy the stomach's craving, let the one be clear and not so bitter as to keep the imbiber's heart protesting all day, and the other hot enough to melt butter and of ethereal lightness. The egg is the most sinned against of all foods. It would seem that no one could or would wantonly ruin an egg, a thing so useful, so inoffensive; and yet the proper cooking of an egg is one of the most difficult of all culinary arts. Millions of eggs are ruined every year in American kitchens. Better that the whole annual output should be cast into the sea than that one egg should offend the eye and the palate of the expectant breakfaster.

It grieves me to be obliged to confess that in hotels and on dining-cars, particularly west of Pittsburgh, many of my fellow citizens are weak before the temptation of hot cakes, drenched in syrup. I have visited homes where the griddle is an implement

frequently invoked through the winter months, and I have at times, in my own house, met the buckwheat cake and the syrup jug and meekly fallen before their combined assault; but the sight of a man eating hot cakes on a flying train, after a night in a sleeper, fills me with a sense of desolation. Verily it is not alone the drama that the tired business man has brought to low estate!

Sausage and buckwheat cakes have never appealed to me as an inevitable combination like ham and eggs. Beefsteak and onions at the breakfast hour are only for those who expect to devote the remainder of the day to crime or wood-chopping. The scent in itself is not the incense for rosy-fingered morn; and steak at breakfast, particularly in these times of perpendicular prices, speaks for vulgar display rather than generosity.

The history of breakfast, the many forms that it has known, the customs of various tribes and nations, assist little in any attempt to re-establish the meal in public confidence. Plato may have done his loftiest thinking on an empty stomach; I incline to the belief that Sophocles was at all times a light breakfaster; Horace must regret that he passed into the Elysian Fields without knowing the refreshing qualities of a grapefruit. If my post-mortem terminal were less problematical, I should like to carry him a grapefruit—a specimen not chilled to death in cold storage—and divide it with him, perhaps adding a splash of Falernian for memory's sake. But the habits of the good and great of olden times are not of the slightest importance to us of twentieth-century America. Still, not to ignore wholly the familiar literary associations suggested by my subject, Samuel Rogers and his weakness for entertaining at breakfast shall have honorable mention. Rogers's breakfasts, one of his contemporaries hinted, were a cunning test of the fitness of the guests to be promoted to the host's dinner table—a process I should have reversed, on the theory that the qualifications for breakfast guests are far more exacting than those for a dinner company. We have testimony that Rogers's breakfasts, informal and with

every one at ease, were much more successful than his dinners. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron and Moore, Southey and Macaulay, the Duke of Wellington and Lord John Russell were fellows to make a lively breakfast table. At one of these functions Coleridge talked for three hours on poetry, an occasion on which, we may assume, the variety or quality of the food didn't matter greatly.

Breakfast as a social medium has never flourished in America, chiefly because of our lack of leisure. Where recognized at all it is thrown into the middle of the day where it becomes an anomaly, an impudent intrusion. A breakfast that is a luncheon is not a breakfast, but a concession to the Philistines. Once, with considerable difficulty, I persuaded a lady of my acquaintance to undertake to popularize breakfast by asking a company, few and fit, for eight o'clock. The first party was delightful, and the second, moved along to nine, was equally successful. But the hostess was so pleased with her success that she increased the number of guests to a dozen and then to fifteen, and advanced the hour to noon, with the result that the felicity of the earlier hours was lost. One must have a concrete program to be of service in these reforms, and I shall say quite fearlessly that a round table set for six is the ideal arrangement.

A breakfast must be planned with greatest care. It should never be resorted to as a means of paying social debts, but arranged with the utmost independence. Where a wife is a desirable guest and the husband is not, there is no reason why a plate should be wasted. On the other hand, I should as rigidly exclude the wife who is socially a non-conductor. The talk at a breakfast table must be spirited, and it will not be otherwise if the company is well chosen. It's an absurd idea that candle-light is essential to sociability and that wit will not sparkle in the early morning. Some of the best talk I ever listened to has been at breakfast tables, where the guests conversed freely under the inspiration of a mounting sun. Doctor Holmes clearly be-

lieved the breakfast hour appropriate for the disclosure of the sprightliest philosophy.

An American novelist once explained that he did his writing in the afternoon because he couldn't make love in the morning. Not make love in the morning! The thought is barbarous. Morning is of sentiment all compact. Morning to the lover who possesses a soul is washed with Olympian dews. The world is all before him where to choose and his heart is his only guide. Love is not love that fears the morning light. . . . There was a house by the sea, whence a girl used to dart forth every morning for a run over the rocks. We used to watch her from our windows, admiring the lightness of her step, her unconscious grace as she was silhouetted on some high point of the shore against the blue of the sea and sky. It was to think of him, her lover, in the free sanctuary of the new, clean day that she ran that morning race with her own spirits. And he, perhaps knowing that she was thus preparing herself for their first meeting, would fly after her, and they would come running back, hand in hand, and appear with glowing cheeks and shining eyes at the breakfast table, to communicate to the rest of us the joy of youth.

There are houses in which participation in the family breakfast is frankly denied to the guest, who is informed that by pressing a button in his room coffee will appear at any hour that pleases his fancy. Let us consider this a little. The ideal guest is rare; the number of persons one really enjoys having about, free to penetrate the domestic arcana, is small indeed. This I say who am not an inhospitable soul. That a master and mistress should keep the morning free is, however, no sign of unfriendliness; the shoving of breakfast into a room does not argue necessarily for churlishness, and I have never so interpreted it. A hostess has her own affairs to look after, and the despatch of trays upstairs enables her to guard her morning from invasion. Still, in a country house, a guest is entitled to a fair shot at the morning. The day is happier when the household assembles

at a fixed hour not to be trifled with by a lazy and inconsiderate guest.

Moreover, we are entitled to know what our fellows look like in the morning hours. I have spoken of lovers, and there is no sterner test of the affections than a breakfast-table inspection. Is a yawn unbecoming? We have a right to know with what manner of yawn we are to spend our lives. Is it painful to listen to the crunching of toast in the mouth of the adored? Is the wit laggard in the morning hours when it should be at its nimblest? These are grave matters not lightly to be brushed aside. At breakfast the blemish in the damask cheek publishes itself shamelessly; an evil temper that is subdued by candle-light will betray itself over the morning coffee. At breakfast we are what we are, and not what we may make ourselves for good or ill before the stars twinkle.

I protest against breakfast in bed as not only unsocial but unbecoming in the children of democracy. I have never succumbed to this temptation without experiencing a feeling of humiliation and cowardice. A proper punishment for such self-indulgence is inflicted by the stray crumbs that lodge between the sheets unless one be highly skilled in the handling of breakfast trays. Crumbs in bed! Procrustes missed a chance here. The presence of emptied dishes in a bedroom is disheartening in itself; the sight of them brings to a sensitive soul a conviction of incompetence and defeat. You cannot evade their significance; they are the wreck of a battle lost before you have buckled on your armor or fired an arrow at the foe. My experiments have been chiefly in hotels, where I have shrunk from appearing in a vast hall built for banqueting and wholly unsuitable for breakfasting; but better suffer this gloomy isolating experience than huddle between covers and balance a tray on stubborn knees that rebel at the indignity.

The club breakfast is an infamous device designed to relieve the mind of what should be the pleasant privilege of selection. I am uninformed as to who invented this iniquity of numbered

alternatives, but I unhesitatingly pronounce him an enemy of mankind. Already too many forces are operating to beat down the imagination. I charge this monstrosity upon the propagandists of realism; certainly no romanticist in the full possession of his powers would tolerate a thing so deadly to the play of fancy. I want neither the No. 7 nor the No. 9 prescribed on the card; and the waiter's index finger wabbling down the margin in an attempt to assist me is an affront, an impudence. Breakfast should be an affair between man and his own soul; a business for the initiative, not the referendum.

Breakfast out of doors is the ideal arrangement, or in winter under an ample screen of glass. My own taste is for a perspective of sea or lake; but a lusty young river at the elbow is not to be despised. The camper, of course, has always the best of it; a breakfast of fresh-caught trout with an Indian for company serves to quicken such vestiges of the primitive as remain in us. But we do not, if we are wise, wait for ideal conditions. It is a part of the great game of life to make the best of what we have, particularly in a day that finds the world spinning madly "down the ringing grooves of change."

The breakfast table must be made a safe place for humanity, an inspirational center of democracy. A land whose people drowsily turn over for another nap at eight o'clock, or languidly ring for coffee at eleven, is doomed to destruction. Of such laziness is unpreparedness born—the vanguard of the enemy already howling at the postern; treason rampant in the citadel; wailing in the court. Breakfast, a sensible meal at a seasonable hour; sausage or beefsteak if you are capable of such atrocities; or only a juicy orange if your appetite be dainty; but breakfast, a cheerful breakfast with family or friends, no matter how great the day's pressure. This, partaken of in a mood of kindliness and tolerance toward all the world, is a definite accomplishment. By so much we are victors, and whether the gulfs wash us down or we sight the happy isles we have set sail with flags flying and to the stirring roll of drums.

CONVERSATION *

A. C. BENSON

(The master of Magdalen, at the time of his recent death in 1925, was still cantering gracefully over the pleasant fields of composition in a manner befitting a late Victorian. It was not that he wrote so many books, though there were plenty of them, but that he appears to have written them all so nonchalantly. But Benson, who was a master at Eton before his connection with Magdalen College at Oxford, had all the miscellaneous information and the tolerance of mood which British aristocrats expect at a headmaster's table after the annual cricket game, especially when the headmaster is the son of a late archbishop of Canterbury.

Perhaps, indeed, the archbishop and not Eton was responsible. For all three of his sons manifested a similar ease in composition. Hugh, who became a Roman priest, was the most intense of them. His novels of Catholic priests and society in secluded country parishes glow with occasional passages of spiritual power. E. F. Benson, a playwright and novelist, author in 1922 of *Miss Mapp,* a twentieth century *Cranford,* is more like his brother Arthur. And Archbishop Benson was noted for his tolerant and benign personality.

Family affairs, at all events, have consumed a good share of A. C. Benson's attention. In 1899 he wrote a life of his father; in 1915 a biography of his brother Hugh who had died of tuberculosis; and in 1924 he assembled a volume entitled *Memories and Friends* which is devoted mostly to archepiscopal society. Previous to this work, as a younger man, he revealed his own

* From *From a College Window.* G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1906.

Victorian contacts in lives of Tennyson, Rossetti, Fitzgerald, and Pater, men who were influential during his father's maturity.

But there have been essays too. Perhaps the best known of them is the collection *From a College Window* (1906). Herein Benson surrenders his loose change of ideas on many "stock" themes for essays: books, beauty, education, ambition, games, habits, religion. The essay on Conversation is typical of them all. Reminiscent and anecdotal, rich in references to daily life but showing an agreeable economy in the use of ideas, the essay itself is a good example of what conversation may be when an easy talker is granted, contrary to rules, a monopoly of the occasion.)

CONVERSATION

I CANNOT help wishing sometimes that English people had more theories about conversation. Really good talk is one of the greatest pleasures there is, and yet how rarely one comes across it! There are a good many people among my acquaintance who on occasions are capable of talking well. But what they seem to lack is initiative, and deliberate purpose. If people would only look upon conversation in a more serious light, much would be gained. I do not of course mean, Heaven forbid! that people should try to converse seriously; that results in the worst kind of dreariness, in feeling, as Stevenson said, that one has the brain of a sheep and the eyes of a boiled codfish. But I mean that the more seriously one takes an amusement, the more amusing it becomes. What I wish is that people would apply the same sort of seriousness to talk that they apply to golf and bridge; that they should desire to improve their game, brood over their mistakes, try to do better. Why is it that so many people would think it priggish and effeminate to try to improve their talk, and yet think it manly and rational to try to shoot better? Of course it must be done with a natural zest and enjoyment, or it is useless. What a ghastly picture one gets of the old-fashioned talkers and wits committing a number of subjects to memory, turning over a commonplace book for apposite anecdotes and jests, adding dates to those selected that they may not tell the same story again too soon, learning up a list of epigrams, stuck in a shaving-glass, when they are dressing for dinner, and then sallying forth primed to bursting with conversation! It is all very well to know beforehand the kind of line you would wish to take, but spontaneity is a necessary ingredient of talk, and to make up one's mind to get certain stories in, is to deprive talk

of its fortuitous charm. When two celebrated talkers of the kind that I have described used to meet, the talk was nothing but a brisk interchange of anecdotes. There is a story of Macaulay and some other great conversationalist getting into the swing at breakfast when staying, I think, with Lord Lansdowne. They drew their chairs to the fire, the rest of the company formed a circle round them, and listened meekly to the dialogue until luncheon. What an appalling picture! One sympathizes with Carlyle on the occasion when he was asked to dinner to meet a great talker, who poured forth a continuous flow of jest and anecdote until the meal was far advanced. Then came a lull; Carlyle laid down his knife and fork, and looking round with the famous "crucified" expression on his face, said in a voice of agonized entreaty, "For God's sake take me away, and put me in a room by myself and give me a pipe of tobacco!" He felt, as I have felt on such occasions, an imperative need of silence and recollection and repose. Indeed, as he said on another occasion, of one of Coleridge's harangues, "to sit still and be pumped into is never an exhilarating process."

That species of talker is, however, practically extinct; though indeed I have met men whose idea of talk was a string of anecdotes, and who employed the reluctant intervals of silence imposed upon them by the desperate attempt of fellow-guests to join in the fun, in arranging the points of their next anecdote.

What seems to me so odd about a talker of that kind is the lack of any sense of justice about his talk. He presumably enjoys the exercise of speech, and it seems to me strange that it should not occur to him that others may like it, too, and that he should not concede a certain opportunity to others to have their say, if only in the interests of fair play. It is as though a gourmet's satisfaction in a good dinner were not complete unless he could prevent every one else from partaking of the food before them.

What is really most needed in social gatherings is a kind of moderator of the talk, an informal president. Many people,

as I have said, are quite capable of talking interestingly, if they get a lead. The perfect moderator should have a large stock of subjects of general interest. He should, so to speak, kick off. And then he should either feel, or at least artfully simulate, an interest in other people's point of view. He should ask questions, reply to arguments, encourage, elicit expressions of opinion. He should not desire to steer his own course, but follow the line that the talk happens to take. If he aims at the reputation of being a good talker, he will win a far higher fame by pursuing this course; for it is a lamentable fact that, after a lively talk, one is apt to remember far better what one has onself contributed to the discussion than what other people have said; and if you can send guests away from a gathering feeling that they have talked well, they will be disposed in that genial mood to concede conversational merit to the other participators. A naïve and simple-minded friend of my own once cast an extraordinary light on the subject, by saying to me, the day after an agreeable symposium at my own house, "We had a very pleasant evening with you yesterday. I was in great form!"

The only two kinds of talker that I find tiresome are the talker of paradoxes and the egotist. A few paradoxes are all very well; they are stimulating and gently provocative. But one gets tired of a string of them; they become little more than a sort of fence erected round a man's mind; one despairs of ever knowing what a paradoxical talker really thinks. Half the charm of good talk consists in the glimpses and peeps one gets into the stuff of a man's thoughts; and it is wearisome to feel that a talker is forever tossing subjects on his horns, perpetually trying to say the unexpected, the startling thing. In the best talk of all, a glade suddenly opens up, like the glades in the Alpine forests through which they bring the timber down to the valley; one sees a long green vista, all bathed in shimmering sunshine, with the dark head of a mountain at the top. So in the best talk one has a sudden sight of something high, sweet, serious, austere.

The other kind of talk that I find very disagreeable is the

talk of a full-fledged egotist, who converses without reference to his hearers, and brings out what is in his mind. One gets interesting things in this way from time to time; but the essence, as I have said, of good talk is that one should have provoking and stimulating peeps into other minds, not that one should be compelled to gaze and stare into them. I have a friend, or rather an acquaintance, whose talk is just as if he opened a trap-door into his mind: you look into a dark place where something flows, stream or sewer; sometimes it runs clear and brisk, but at other times it seems to be charged with dirt and débris; and yet there is no escape; you have to stand and look, to breathe the very odors of the mind, until he chooses to close the door.

The mistake that many earnest and persevering talkers make is to suppose that to be engrossed is the same thing as being engrossing. It is true of conversation as of many other things, that the half is better than the whole. People who are fond of talking ought to beware of being lengthy. How one knows the despair of conversing with a man who is determined to make a clear and complete statement of everything, and not to let his hearers off anything! Arguments, questions, views, rise in the mind in the course of the harangue, and are swept away by the moving stream. Such talkers suffer from a complacent feeling that their information is correct and complete, and that their deductions are necessarily sound. But it is quite possible to form and hold a strong opinion, and yet to realize that it is after all only one point of view, and that there is probably much to be said on the other side.

Dr. Johnson used to say that he loved to stretch his legs and have his talk out; and the fact remains that the best conversation one gets is the conversation that one does not scheme for, and even on occasions from which one has expected but little. The talks that remain in my mind as of preeminent interest are long leisurely *tête-à-tête* talks, oftenest perhaps of all in the course of a walk, when exercise sends the blood coursing through the brain, when a pleasant countryside tunes the spirit to a

serene harmony of mood, and when the mind, stimulated into a joyful readiness by association with some quiet, just, and perceptive companion, visits its dusty warehouse, and turns over its fantastic stores. Then is the time to penetrate into the inmost labyrinths of a subject, to indulge in pleasing discursiveness, as the fancy leads one, and yet to return again and again with renewed relish to the central theme.

Such talks as these, with no overshadowing anxiety upon the mind, held on breezy uplands or in pleasant country lanes, make the moments, indeed, to which the mind, in the sad mood which remembers the days that are gone, turns with that sorrowful desolation of which Dante speaks, as to a treasure lightly spent and ungratefully regarded. How such hours rise up before the mind! Even now as I write I think of such a scene, when I walked with a friend, long dead, on the broad yellow sands beside a western sea. I can recall the sharp hiss of the shoreward wind, the wholesome savors of the brine, the brisk clap of small waves, the sand-dunes behind the shore, pricked with green tufts of grass, the ships moving slowly on the sea's rim, and the shadowy headland to which we hardly seemed to draw more near, while we spoke of all that was in our hearts, and all that we meant to do and be. That day was a great gift from God; and yet, as I received it, I did not know how fair a jewel of memory it would be. I like to think that there are many such jewels of recollection clasped close in the heart's casket, even in the minds of men and women that I meet, that seem so commonplace to me, so interesting to themselves!

It is strange, in reflecting about the memorable talks I have held with different people, to find that I remember best the talks that I have had with men, rather than with women. There is a kind of simple openness, an equal comradeship in talks with men, which I find it difficult to attain in the case of women. I suppose that some unsuspected mystery of sex creeps in, and that with women there is a whole range of experiences and emotions that one does not share, so that there is an invisible and

intangible barrier erected between the two minds. I feel, too, in talking with women, that I am met with almost too much sympathy and tact, so that one falls into an egotistical mood. It is difficult, too, I find, to be as frank in talking with women as with men; because I think that women tend more than men to hold a preconceived idea of one's character and tastes; and it is difficult to talk simply and naturally to any one who has formed a mental picture of one, especially if one is aware that it is not correct. But men are slower to form impressions, and thus talk is more experimental; moreover, in talking with men, one encounters more opposition, and opposition puts one more on one's mettle.

Thus a *tête-à-tête* with a man of similar tastes, who is just and yet sympathetic, critical yet appreciative, whose point of view just differs enough to make it possible for him to throw side-lights on a subject, and to illumine aspects of it that were unperceived and neglected—this is a high intellectual pleasure, a potion to be delicately sipped at leisure.

But after all it is impossible to say what makes a conversationalist. There are people who seem to possess every qualification for conversing except the power to converse. The two absolutely essential things are, in the first place, a certain charm of mind and even manner, which is a purely instinctive gift; and, in the second place, real sympathy with, real interest in, the deuteragonist.

For the fact remains that conversation is a real art, and depends like all other arts upon congenial circumstances and suitable surroundings. People are too apt to believe that, because they have interests in their minds and can put those interests into words, they are equipped for the pretty and delicate game of talk. But a rare admixture of qualities is needed, and a subtle conversational effect, a sudden fancy, that throws a charming or a bizarre light on a subject, a power of pleasing metaphorical expression, the communication of an imaginative interest to a familiar topic—all these things are of the nature

of instinctive art. I have heard well-informed and sensible people talk of a subject in a way that made me feel that I desired never to hear it mentioned again; but I have heard, on the other hand, people talk of matters which I had believed to be worn threadbare by use, and yet communicate a rich color, a fragrant sentiment to them, which made me feel that I had never thought adequately on the topic before. One should be careful, I think, to express to such persons one's appreciation and admiration of their gifts, for the art is so rare that we ought to welcome it when we find it; and, like all arts, it depends to a great extent for its sustenance on the avowed gratitude of those who enjoy it. It is on these subtle half-toned glimpses of personality and difference that most of our happy impressions of life depend; and no one can afford wilfully to neglect sources of innocent joy, or to lose opportunities of pleasure through a stupid or brutal contempt for the slender resources out of which these gentle effects are produced.

TRIVIA *

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

(Logan Pearsall Smith is not very well known in this country. The reason is partly the aloofness and subtlety of his mind which the selections that follow sufficiently reveal. But it is also in part due to his long residence in England. Born in New Jersey, he may perhaps be forgiven for escaping to Haverford in Pennsylvania as a more happy abode for the son of a Quaker ancestry demanding education. But the desire of escape grew immoderate. He went to Harvard, and then in 1893 to Balliol College at Oxford. In England he found himself so comfortably situated that for many years he did little writing except the brief and readable history of the English language in the Home University series. But in 1917 he published *Trivia*, and those who read them proclaimed that a man named Smith had invented a new form of essay.

The *Trivia* are really anecdotes. But they stand in relation to the ordinary anecdote as Katherine Mansfield's short stories to the ordinary machine-made product of our magazine presses. Though they look simple enough, if you hold them to the light of a careful reading, they are seen to shimmer with innuendo. The silver laughter of the Comic Spirit plays upon an incident and brings to the surface its meaning as the sun the changing colors of an opal. Wherever there is pretense and self-delusion, thither hastens the Comic Spirit to observe and laugh. And, one adds regretfully, he discovers these qualities in their most superb development among our best people. The debutantes and dowagers of polite society he finds as simple and primitive as ordinary

* From *More Trivia*.. Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921.

persons, once you deprive them of the protection of convention and position. Far from appearing sophisticated, they seem to possess a commonplace intelligence. They are certainly not at their best when the desire overtakes them to go in for movements. They become the prey of catchwords, and mouth the terms of spiritualism or millenarianism. Even more amusing are they when made buoyant by a devotion to poetry. They are swept into the absurd but refreshing realm where words may be used for their sound alone, without any definite attention to their sense. Jargon reigns supreme. But even more amusing to the Comic Spirit are those who think themselves too sophisticated for this sort of frailty and discover unexpectedly that they are only members of a numerous cult who all feel alike superior to the "catchwords of the age."

At times, however, the spirit, as embodied in Mr. Smith, grows a little weary from over-exercise. And so, in certain essays, the author communes with himself. He regrets the absence of real poetry and sincere idealism in the world he frequents. Perhaps refined old ladies somewhere might appreciate his love of words, their rhythms and the curious changes of meaning they undergo. Perhaps they might understand him when his heart would write a new *L'Après Midi d'un Faun*. Well, we are all alike. A gross bombast adulterates our sincerity. Our fanciful imaginations persist in beribboning the facts of life. With a sly and Quakerish pensiveness, the Comic Spirit smiles again.)

TRIVIA

Longevity

"But when you are as old as I am!" I said to the young lady in pink satin. "But I don't know how old you are," that young lady answered almost archly. We were getting on quite nicely.

"Oh I'm endlessly old; my memory goes back almost forever. I come out of the Middle Ages. I am the primitive savage we are all descended from; I believe in Devil-worship, and the power of the Stars; I dance under the new Moon, naked and tattooed and holy. I am a Cave-dweller, a contemporary of Mastodons and Mammoths; I am pleistocene and neolithic, and full of the lusts and terrors of the great pre-glacial forests. But that's nothing; I am millions of years older; I am an arboreal Ape, an aged Baboon, with all its instincts; I am a pre-simian quadruped, I have great claws, eyes that see in the dark, and a long prehensile tail."

"Good gracious," said the terrified young lady in pink satin. Then she turned, and for the rest of the dinner talked in a hushed voice with her other neighbor.

Waiting

We met at Waterloo; as we were paying the same visit, we traveled in the train together; but when we got out at that country station, she found that her boxes had not arrived. They might have gone on to the next station; I waited with her while inquiries were telephoned down the line. It was a mild spring evening; side by side we sat in silence on a wooden bench facing the platform; the bustle caused by the passing train ebbed

away; the dusk deepened, and one by one the stars twinkled out in the serene sky.

"How peaceful it is!" I remarked at last. "Is there not a certain charm," I went on after another pause, "in waiting like this in silence under the stars? It's after all a little adventure, is it not? a moment with a certain mood and color and atmosphere of its own."

"I often think," I once more mused aloud, "I often think that it is in moments like this of waiting and hushed suspense, that one tastes most fully the savor of life, the uncertainty, and yet the sweetness of our frail mortal condition, so capable of fear and hope, so dependent on a million accidents."

"Luggage!" I said, after another silence, "is it not after all absurd that minds which contemplate the universe should cart about with them brushes and boots and drapery in leather boxes? Suppose all this paltry junk," I said, giving my suitcase, which stood near me, a disdainful poke with my umbrella, "suppose it all disappears, what after all does it matter?"

At last she spoke. "But it's not your luggage," she said, "but mine which is lost."

The Echo

Now and then, from the other end of the table, words and phrases reached us as we talked.

"What do they mean by complexes?" she asked. "Oh, it's only one of the catchwords of the day," I answered. "Everything's a complex just now."

"The talk of most people," I went on, "is simply—how shall I put it?—simply the ticking of clocks; it marks the hour, but it has no other interest. But I like to think for myself, to be something more than a mere mouthpiece of the age I live in—a mere sounding-board and echo of contemporary chatter."

"Just listen!" I said as again their raised voices reached our ears.

"It's simply one of the catchwords of the day," some one was shouting, "the merest echo of contemporary chatter!"

Day Dream

In the cold and malicious society in which I live, I must never mention the Soul, nor speak of my aspirations. If I ever once let these people get a glimpse of the higher side of my nature, they would set on me like a pack of wolves and tear me in pieces.

I wish I had soulful friends—refined Maiden Ladies with ideals and long noses, who live at Hampstead or Putney, and play Chopin with passion. On sad autumn afternoons I would go and have tea with them, and talk of the spiritual meaning of Beethoven's late Sonatas; or discuss in the twilight the pathos of life and the Larger Hope.

Things to Write

What things there are to write, if one could only write them! My mind is full of gleaming thoughts; gay moods and mysterious, moth-like meditations hover in my imagination, fanning their painted wings. They would make my fortune if I could catch them; but always the rarest, those freaked with azure and the deepest crimson, flutter away beyond my reach.

The childish and ever-baffled chase of these filmy nothings often seems, for one of sober years in a sad world, a trifling occupation. But have I not read of the great Kings of Persia who used to ride out to hawk for butterflies, nor deemed this pastime beneath their royal dignity?

Magic

"Do you think there are ghosts?" she foamed, her eyes ablaze, "do you believe in Magic?" I had no intention of discussing the supernatural with this spook-enthusiast.

"Magic," I mused aloud, "what a beautiful word Magic is when you think of it."

"Are you interested in etymology?" I asked. "To my mind there is nothing more fascinating than the derivation of words —it's full of the romance and wonder of real life and history. Think of *Magic,* for instance; it comes, as no doubt you know, from the Magi, or ancient priests of Persis."

"Don't you love our desposit of Persian words in English? To me they glitter like jewels in our northern speech. *Magic* and *Paradise,* for instance; and the names of flowers and gems and rich fruits and tissues—*Tulip* and *Lilac* and *Jasmin* and *Peach* and *Lapis Lazuli,*" I chanted, waving my hands to keep off the spooks, "and *Orange* and *Azure* and *Scarlet.*"

ON JARGON*

Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch

(Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch was born in Cornwall in 1863. This Celtic blood of his was a guarantee that if he should turn to writing, he was bound to become a writer of romances. And so he did. Beginning with *Dead Man's Rock* in 1877, he has devoted the greater part of his life to romantic fiction. Other occupations, however, have claimed him from time to time. After graduating from Trinity College, Oxford, he lectured there on the classics for a year. Then he went up to London, and was connected with *The Speaker* until this organ of opinion perished in 1899. Meanwhile he had issued a volume of *Poems and Ballads* in 1896. In 1910 he was asked to edit the *Oxford Book of Ballads*. Two years later he edited the *Oxford Book of Victorian Verse,* which has found its place as a worthy supplement to Palgrave's *Golden Treasury.*

So, when in the same year, the King Edward the Seventh professorship of English literature was established at Cambridge University, the only surprising element in the choice of Quiller-Couch to fill it was that he was an Oxford man. This professorship was the first for the study of their own literature to be established at the historic English universities. And the innovation of its founding was paralleled by that of going outside academic walls for its occupant. The choice was more than satisfactory. Quiller-Couch, who had practised literature as well as read widely among its classic authors, and who brought to its study a Celtic freshness of temperament, was found both informative and urbane as a lecturer. If for his theories and

* From *On the Art of Writing.* G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916.

ideas he relied upon the principles of classicism which Arnold had enunciated, yet he had recourse in a stimulating way to his own experience for their illustration. His lectures, in fact, were so popular among the undergraduates that they were brought together into a volume, *On the Art of Writing* (1916). We have quoted from them the chapter On Jargon, which gives trenchant and amusing examples of that disregard for the primary meaning of words to which all writers are liable, whether they are freshmen in college or practising journalists.)

ON JARGON

I REMEMBER to have heard somewhere of a religious body in the United States of America which had reason to suspect one of its churches of accepting spiritual consolation from a colored preacher—an offense against the laws of the Synod—and dispatched a Disciplinary Committee with power to act; and of the Committee's returning to report itself unable to take any action under its terms of reference, for that while a person undoubtedly colored had undoubtedly occupied the pulpit and had audibly spoken from it in the Committee's presence, the performance could be brought within no definition of preaching known or discoverable. So it is with that infirmity of speech —that flux, that determination of words to the mouth, or to the pen,—which, though it be familiar to you in parliamentary debates, in newspapers, and as the staple language of Blue Books, Committees, Official Reports, I take leave to introduce to you as prose which is not prose and under its real name of Jargon.

You must not confuse this Jargon with what is called Journalese. The two overlap, indeed, and have a knack of assimilating each other's vices. But Jargon finds, maybe, the most of its votaries among good douce people who have never written to or for a newspaper in their life, who would never talk of "adverse climatic conditions" when they mean "bad weather"; who have never trifled with verbs such as "obsess," "recrudesce," "envisage," "adumbrate," or with phrases such as "the psychological moment," "the true inwardness," "it gives furiously to think." It dallies with Latinity—"sub silentio," "de die in diem," "cui bono?" (always in the sense, unsuspected by Cicero, of "What is the profit?")—but not for the sake of style. Your journalist at the worst is an artist in his way; he daubs paint

of this kind upon the lily with a professional zeal; the more flagrant (or, to use his own word, arresting) the pigment, the happier is his soul. Like the Babu he is trying all the while to embellish our poor language, to make it more floriferous, more poetical—like the Babu for example who, reporting his mother's death, wrote, "Regret to inform you, the hand that rocked the cradle has kicked the bucket."

There is metaphor; *there* is ornament; *there* is a sense of poetry, though as yet groping in a world unrealized. No such gusto marks—no such zeal, artistic or professional, animates—the practitioners of Jargon, who are, most of them (I repeat), douce respectable persons. Caution is its father; the instinct to save everything and especially trouble; its mother, Indolence. It looks precise, but is not. It is, in these times, *safe:* a thousand men have said it before and not one to your knowledge had been prosecuted for it. And so, like respectability in Chicago, Jargon stalks unchecked in our midst. It is becoming the language of Parliament; it has become the medium through which Boards of Government, County Councils, Syndicates, Committees, Commercial Firms, express the processes as well as the conclusions of their thought and so voice the reason of their being.

Has a Minister to say "No" in the House of Commons? Some men are constitutionally incapable of saying no; but the Minister conveys it thus: "The answer to the question is in the negative." That means "no." Can you discover it to mean anything less, or anything more except that the speaker is a pompous person? —which was no part of the information demanded.

That is Jargon, and it happens to be accurate. But as a rule Jargon is by no means accurate, its method being to walk circumspectly around its target; and its faith, that having done so it has either hit the bull's-eye or at least achieved something equivalent, and safer.

Thus the clerk of a Board of Guardians will minute that—

In the case of John Jenkins deceased the coffin provided was of the usual character.

Now this is not accurate. "In the case of John Jenkins deceased," for whom a coffin was supplied, it is wholly superfluous to tell us that he is deceased. But actually John Jenkins never had more than one case, and that was the coffin. The clerk says he had two,—a coffin in a case; but I suspect the clerk to be mistaken, and I am sure he errs in telling us that the coffin was of the usual character; for coffins have no character, usual or unusual.

Have you begun to detect the two main vices of Jargon? The first is that it uses circumlocution rather than short straight speech. It says: "In the case of John Jenkins deceased, the coffin" when it means "John Jenkins's coffin"; and its yea is not yea, neither is its nay nay; but its answer is in the affirmative or in the negative, as the foolish and superfluous "case" may be. The second vice is that it habitually chooses vague woolly abstract nouns rather than concrete ones. I shall have something to say by-and-by about the concrete noun, and how you should ever be struggling for it whether in prose or in verse. For the moment I content myself with advising you, if you would write masculine English, never to forget the old tag of your Latin Grammar—

> Masculine will only be
> Things that you can touch and see.

But since these lectures are meant to be a course in First Aid to writing, I will content myself with one or two extremely rough rules; yet I shall be disappointed if you do not find them serviceable.

The first is: Whenever in your reading you come across one of these words, *case, instance, character, nature, condition, persuasion, degree*—whenever in writing your pen betrays you to one or another of them—pull yourself up and take thought.

If it be "case" (I choose it as Jargon's dearest child--"in Heaven yclept Metonomy") turn to the dictionary, if you will, and seek out what meaning can be derived from *casus*, its Latin ancestor; then try how, with a little trouble, you can extricate yourself from that case. The odds are, you will feel like a butterfly who has discarded his chrysalis.

Here are some specimens to try your hand on:

(1) All those tears which inundated Lord Hugh Cecil's head were dry in the case of Mr. Harold Cox.

Poor Mr. Cox! left gasping in his aquarium!

(2) [From a cigar-merchant.] In any case, let us send you a case on approval.

(3) It is contended that Consols have fallen in consequence: but such is by no means the case.

"Such," by the way, is another spoilt child of Jargon, especially in Committee's Rules—"Coopted members may be eligible as such; such members to continue to serve for such time as"—and so on.

(4) Even in the purely Celtic areas only in two or three cases do the Bishops bear Celtic names.

For "cases" read "dioceses."

Instance. In most instances the players were below their form.

But what were they playing at? Instances?

Character—Nature. There can be no doubt that the accident was caused through the dangerous nature of the spot, the hidden character of the by-road, and the utter absence of any warning or danger signal.

Mark the foggy wording of it all! And yet the man hit something and broke his neck! Contrast that explanation with the

verdict of a coroner's jury in the west of England on a drowned postman: "We find that deceased met his death by an act of God, caused by sudden overflowing of the river Walkham and helped out by the scandalous neglect of the way-wardens."

The Aintree course is notoriously of a trying nature.

On account of its light character, purity, and age, Usher's whisky is a whisky that will agree with you.

Order. The mésalliance was of a pronounced order.

Condition. He was conveyed to his place of residence in an intoxicated condition.

"He was carried home drunk."

Quality and *Section.* Mr. ——, exhibiting no less than five works, all of a superior quality, figures prominently in the oil section.

—This was written of an exhibition of pictures.

Degree. A singular degree of rarity prevails in the earlier editions of this romance.

That is Jargon. In prose it runs simply "The earlier editions of this romance are rare"—or "are very rare"—or even (if you believe what I take leave to doubt), "are singularly rare"; which should mean that they are rarer than the editions of any other work in the world.

Now what I ask you to consider about these quotations is that in each the writer was using Jargon to shirk prose, palming off periphrases upon us when with a little trouble he could have gone straight to the point. "A singular degree of rarity prevails," "the accident was caused through the dangerous nature of the spot," "but such is by no means the case." We may not be capable of much; but we can all write better than that, if we take a little trouble. In place of, "the Aintree course is of a trying nature" we can surely say "Aintree is a trying course" or "the Aintree course is a trying one"—just that and nothing more.

Next, having trained yourself to keep a lookout for these worst offenders (and you will be surprised to find how quickly you get into the way of it), proceed to push your suspicions out among the whole cloudy host of abstract terms. "How excellent a thing is sleep," sighed Sancho Panza; "it wraps a man round like a cloak"—an excellent example, by the way, of how to say a thing concretely; a Jargoneer would have said that "among the beneficent qualities of sleep its capacity for withdrawing the human consciousness from the contemplation of immediate circumstances may perhaps be accounted not the least remarkable." How vile a thing—shall we say?—is the abstract noun! It wraps a man's thoughts round like cotton wool.

Here is a pretty little nest of specimens, found in *The Times* newspaper by Messrs. H. W. and F. G. Fowler, authors of that capital little book *The King's English:*

One of the most important reforms mentioned in the rescript is the unification of the organization of judicial institutions and the guarantee for all the tribunals of the independence necessary for securing to all classes of the community equality before the law.

I do not dwell on the cacophony; but, to convey a straightforward piece of news, might not the editor of *The Times* as well employ a man to write:

One of the most important reforms is that of the Courts, which need a uniform system and to be made independent. In this way only can men be assured that all are equal before the law.

I think he might.

A day or two ago the musical critic of the *Standard* wrote this:

MR. LAMOND IN BEETHOVEN

Mr. Frederick Lamond, the Scottish pianist, as an interpreter of Beethoven has few rivals. At this second recital of the com-

poser's works at Bechstein Hall on Saturday afternoon he again displayed a complete sympathy and understanding of his material that extracted the very essence of æsthetic and musical value from each selection he undertook. The delightful intimacy of his playing and his unusual force of individual expression are invaluable assets, which, allied to his technical brilliancy, enable him to achieve an artistic triumph. The two lengthy Variations in E flat major (Op. 35) and in D major, the latter on the Turkish March from *The Ruins of Athens,* when included in the same program, require a master hand to provide continuity of interest. *To say that Mr. Lamond successfully avoided moments that might at times, in these works, have inclined to comparative disinterestedness, would be but a moderate way of expressing the remarkable fascination with which his versatile playing endowed them,* but *at the same time* two of the sonatas given included a similar form of composition, and no matter how intellectually brilliant may be the interpretation, the extravagant use of a certain mode is bound in time to become somewhat ineffective. In the Three Sonatas, the E major (Op. 109), the A major (Op. 2), No. 2, and the C minor (Op. 111), Mr. Lamond signalized his perfect insight into the composer's varying moods.

Will you not agree with me that here is no writing, here is no prose, here is not even English, but merely a flux of words to the pen?

Here again is a string, a concatenation—say, rather, a tiara of gems of purest ray serene from the dark unfathomed caves of a Scottish newspaper:

The Chinese viewpoint, as indicated in this letter, may not be without interest to your readers, because it evidently is suggestive of more than an academic attempt to explain an unpleasant aspect of things which, if allowed to materialize, might suddenly culminate in disaster resembling the Chang-Sha riots. It also ventures to illustrate incidents having their inception in recent premature endeavors to accelerate the development of Protestant missions in China; but we would hope for the sake

of the interests involved that what my correspondent describes as "the irresponsible ruffian element" may be known by their various religious designations only within very restricted areas.

Well, the Chinese have given it up, poor fellows! and are asking the Christians—as to-day's newspapers inform us—to pray for them. Do you wonder? But that is, or was, the Chinese "viewpoint,"—and what a willow-pattern viewpoint! Observe its delicacy. It does not venture to interest or be interesting; merely "to be not without interest." But it does "venture to illustrate incidents"—which, for a viewpoint, is brave enough; and this illustration "is suggestive of something more than an academic attempt to explain an unpleasant aspect of things which, if allowed to materialize, might suddenly culminate." *What* materializes? The unpleasant aspect? or the things? Grammar says the "things," "things which if allowed to materialize." But things are materialized already, and as a condition of their being things. It must be the aspect, then, that materializes. But, if so, it is also the aspect that culminates, and an aspect, however unpleasant, can hardly do that, or at worst cannot culminate in anything resembling the Chang-Sha riots. . . . I give it up.

Let us turn to another trick of jargon; the trick of Elegant Variation, so rampant in the sporting press that there, without needing to attend these lectures, the undergraduate detects it for laughter:—

Hayward and C. B. Fry now faced the bowling, which apparently had no terrors for the Surrey crack. The old Oxonian, however, took some time in settling to work. . . .

Yes, you all recognize it and laugh at it. But why do you practise it in your essays? An undergraduate brings me an essay on Byron. In an essay on Byron, Byron is (or ought to be) mentioned many times. I expect, nay exact, that Byron shall be mentioned again and again. But my undergraduate has a blushing sense that to call Byron Byron twice on one page

is indelicate. So Byron, after starting bravely as Byron, in the second sentence turns into "that great but unequal poet" and thenceforward I have as much trouble with Byron as ever Telemachus with Proteus to hold and pin him back to his proper self. Half-way down the page he becomes "the gloomy master of Newstead"; overleaf he is reincarnated into "the meteoric darling of society"; and so proceeds through successive avatars—"this arch-rebel," "the author of *Childe Harold*," "the apostle of scorn," "the ex-Harrovian, proud, but abnormally sensitive of his club-foot," "the martyr of Missolonghi," "the pageant-monger of a bleeding heart." Now this again is jargon. It does not, as most jargon does, come of laziness; but it comes of timidity, which is worse. In literature as in life he makes himself felt who not only calls a spade a spade but has the pluck to double spades and redouble.

For another rule—just as rough and ready, but just as useful: Train your suspicions to bristle up whenever you come upon "as regards," "with regard to," "in respect of," "in connection with," "according as to whether," and the like. They are all dodges of jargon, circumlocutions for evading this or that simple statement; and I say that it is not enough to avoid them nine times out of ten, or nine-and-ninety times out of a hundred. You should never use them. That is positive enough, I hope? Though I cannot admire his style, I admire the man who wrote to me, "Re Tennyson—your remarks anent his *In Memoriam* make me sick"; for though *re* is not a preposition of the first water, and "anent" has enjoyed its day, the finish crowned the work. But here are a few specimens far, very far, worse:—

The special difficulty in Professor Minocelsi's case [our old friend "case" again] arose *in connexion with* the view he holds *relative to* the historical value of the opening pages of Genesis.

That is jargon. In prose, even taking the miserable sentence as it stands constructed, we should write "the difficulty arose over the views he holds about the historical value," etc.

From a popular novelist:—

I was entirely indifferent *as to* the results of the game, caring nothing at all *as to* whether *I had losses or gains*—

Cut out the first "as" in "as to," and the second "as to" altogether, and the sentence begins to be prose—"I was indifferent to the results of the game, caring nothing whether I had losses or gains."

But why, like Dogberry, have "had losses"? Why not simply "lose." Let us try again. "I was entirely indifferent to the results of the game, caring nothing at all whether I won or lost."

Still the sentence remains absurd; for the second clause but repeats the first without adding one jot. For if you care not at all whether you win or lose, you must be entirely indifferent to the results of the game. So why not say, "I was careless if I won or lost," and have done with it?

A man of simple and charming character, he was fitly *associated with* the distinction of the Order of Merit.

I take this gem with some others from a collection made three years ago, by the *Oxford Magazine;* and I hope you admire it as one beyond price. "He was associated with the distinction of the Order of Merit" means "he was given the Order of Merit." If the members of that Order make a society then he was associated with them; but you cannot associate a man with a distinction. The inventor of such fine writing would doubtless have answered Canning's Needy Knife-grinder with:—

I associate thee with sixpence! I will see thee in another association first!

But let us close our *florilegium* and attempt to illustrate jargon by the converse method of taking a famous piece of English (say Hamlet's soliloquy) and remolding a few lines of it in this fashion:—

To be, or the contrary? Whether the former or the latter be preferable would seem to admit of some difference of opinion; the answer in the present case being of an affirmative or of a negative character according as to whether one elects on the one hand to mentally suffer the disfavor of fortune, albeit in an extreme degree, or on the other to boldly envisage adverse conditions in the prospect of eventually bringing them to a conclusion. The condition of sleep is similar to, if not indistinguishable from that of death; and with the addition of finality the former might be considered identical with the latter: so that in this connection it might be argued with regard to sleep that, could the addition be effected, a termination would be put to the endurance of a multiplicity of inconveniences, not to mention a number of downright evils incidental to our fallen humanity, and thus a consummation achieved of a most gratifying nature.

That is jargon: and to write jargon is to be perpetually shuffling around in the fog and cotton-wool of abstract terms; to be forever hearkening, like Ibsen's Peer Gynt, to the voice of the Boyg exhorting you to circumvent the difficulty, to beat the air because it is easier than to flesh your sword in the thing. The first virtue, the touchstone of masculine style, is its use of the active verb and the concrete noun. When you write in the active voice, "They gave him a silver teapot," you write as a man. When you write "He was made the recipient of a silver teapot," you write jargon. But at the beginning set even higher store on the concrete noun. Somebody—I think it was Fitz-Gerald—once posited the question, "What would have become of Christianity if Jeremy Bentham had had the writing of the Parables?" Without pursuing that dreadful inquiry I ask you to note how carefully the Parables—those exquisite short stories—speak only of "things which you can touch and see"—"A sower went forth to sow," "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took,"—and not the Parables only, but the Sermon on the Mount and almost every verse of the Gospel. The Gospel does not, like my young essayist, fear to repeat a

word, if the word be good. The Gospel says "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's"—not "Render unto Cæsar the things that appertain to that potentate." The Gospel does not say "Consider the growth of the lilies," or even "Consider how the lilies grow." It says, "Consider the lilies, how they grow."

Or take Shakespeare. I wager you that no writer of English so constantly chooses the concrete word, in phrase after phrase forcing you to touch and see. No writer so insistently teaches the general through the particular. He does it even in *Venus and Adonis* (as Professor Wendell, of Harvard, pointed out in a brilliant little monograph on Shakespeare, published some ten years ago). Read any page of *Venus and Adonis* side by side with any page of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and you cannot but mark the contrast: in Shakespeare the definite, particular, visualized image, in Marlowe the beautiful generalization, the abstract term, the thing seen at a literary remove. Take the two openings, both of which start out with the sunrise. Marlowe begins:—

> Now had the Morn espied her lover's steeds:
> Whereat she starts, puts on her purple weeds,
> And, red for anger that he stay'd so long,
> All headlong throws herself the clouds among.

Shakespeare wastes no words on Aurora and her feelings, but gets to his hero and to business without ado:—

> Even as the sun with purple-color'd face—

(You have the sun visualized at once),

> Even as the sun with purple-color'd face
> Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn,
> Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the chase;
> Hunting he loved, but love he laugh'd to scorn.

When Shakespeare has to describe a horse, mark how definite he is:—

Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
Broad breast, full eye, small head and nostril wide,
High crest, short ears, straight legs and passing strong;
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide.

Or again, in a casual simile, how definite:—

Upon this promise did he raise his chin,
Like a dive-dipper peering through a wave,
Which, being look'd on, ducks as quickly in.

Or take, if you will, Marlowe's description of Hero's first meeting Leander:—

It lies not in our power to love or hate,
For will in us is over-ruled by fate . . . ,

and set against it Shakespeare's description of Venus' last meeting with Adonis, as she came on him lying in his blood:—

Or as a snail whose tender horns being hit
Shrinks backward in his shelly cave with pain,
And there, all smother'd up, in shade doth sit,
Long after fearing to creep forth again;
So, at his bloody view—

I do not deny Marlowe's lines (if you will study the whole passage) to be lovely. You may even judge Shakspeare's to be crude by comparison. But you cannot help noting that whereas Marlowe steadily deals in abstract, nebulous terms, Shakespeare constantly uses concrete ones, which later on he learned to pack into verse, such as:—

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care.

Is it unfair to instance Marlowe, who died young? Then let us take Webster for the comparison; Webster, a man of genius or of something very like it, and commonly praised by the critics for his mastery over definite, detailed, and what I

may call *solidified sensation*. Let us take this admired passage from his *Duchess of Malfy:*—

Ferdinand. How doth our sister Duchess bear herself
In her imprisonment?
Basola. Nobly: I'll describe her.
She's sad as one long wed to 't, and she seems
Rather to welcome the end of misery
Than shun it: a behavior so noble
As gives a majesty to adversity.*
You may discern the shape of loveliness
More perfect in her tears than in her smiles;
She will muse for hours together;† and her silence
Methinks expresseth more than if she spake.

Now set against this the well-known passage from *Twelfth Night* where the Duke asks and Viola answers a question about someone unknown to him and invented by her—a mere phantasm, in short: yet note how much more definite is the language:—

Viola. My father had a daughter lov'd a man;
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship.
Duke. And what's her history?
Viola. A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek; she pined in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat like Patience on a monument
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?

Observe (apart from the dramatic skill of it) how, when Shakespeare *has* to use the abstract noun "concealment," on an instant it turns into a visible worm "feeding" on the visible rose; how, having to use a second abstract word "patience," at once he solidifies it in tangible stone.

* Note the abstract terms.
† Here we first come on the concrete: and beautiful it is.

Turning to prose, you may easily assure yourselves that men who have written learnedly on the art agree in treating our maxim—to prefer the concrete term to the abstract, the particular to the general, the definite to the vague—as a canon of rhetoric. Whately has much to say on it. The late Mr. E. J. Payne, in one of his admirable prefaces to Burke (prefaces too little known and valued, as too often happens to scholarship hidden away in a schoolbook), illustrated the maxim by setting a passage from Burke's speech *On Conciliation with America* alongside a passage of like purport from Lord Brougham's *Inquiry into the Policy of the European Powers*. Here is the deadly parallel:—

BURKE.	BROUGHAM.
In large bodies the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities. Nature has said it. The Turk cannot govern Ægypt and Arabia and Curdistan as he governs Thrace; nor has he the same dominion in Crimea and Algiers which he has in Brusa and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster. The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose rein, that he may govern at all; and the whole of the force and vigour of his authority in his centre is derived from a prudent relaxation in all his borders.	In all the despotisms of the East, it has been observed that the further any part of the empire is removed from the capital, the more do its inhabitants enjoy some sort of rights and privileges; the more inefficacious is the power of the monarch; and the more feeble and easily decayed is the organization of the government.

You perceive that Brougham has transferred Burke's thought to his own page; but will you not also perceive how pitiably, by

dissolving Burke's vivid particulars into smooth generalities, he has enervated its hold on the mind?

"This particularizing style," comments Mr. Payne, "is the essence of poetry; and in prose it is impossible not to be struck with the energy it produces. Brougham's passage is excellent in its way: but it pales before the flashing lights of Burke's sentences." The best instances of this energy of style, he adds, are to be found in the classical writers of the seventeenth century. "When South says, 'An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise,' he communicates more effectually the notion of the difference between the intellect of fallen and of unfallen humanity than in all the philosophy of his sermons put together."

You may agree with me, or you may not, that South in this passage is expounding trash; but you will agree with Mr. Payne and me that he uttered it vividly.

Let me quote to you, as a final example of this vivid style of writing, a passage from Dr. John Donne far beyond and above anything that ever lay within South's compass:—

The ashes of an Oak in the Chimney are no epitaph of that Oak, to tell me how high or how large that was; it tells me not what flocks it sheltered while it stood, nor what men it hurt when it fell. The dust of great persons' graves is speechless, too; it says nothing, it distinguishes nothing. As soon the dust of a wretch whom thou wouldest not, as of a prince whom thou couldest not look upon will trouble thine eyes if the wind blow it thither; and when a whirlewind hath blown the dust of the Churchyard into the Church, and the man sweep out the dust of the Church into the Churchyard, who will undertake to sift those dusts again and to pronounce, This is the Patrician, this is the noble flowre [flour], this the yeomanly, this the Plebeian bran? So is the death of *Iesabel* (*Iesabel* was a Queen) expressed. They shall not say *This is Iesabel:* not only not wonder that it is, nor pity that it should be; but they shall not say, they shall not know, *This is Iesabel.*

Carlyle noted of Goethe, "his emblematic intellect, his never-failing tendency to transform into *shape*, into *life*, the feeling that may dwell in him. Everything has form, has visual excellence: the poet's imagination bodies forth the forms of things unseen, and his pen turns them into shape."

Perpend this, Gentlemen, and maybe you will not hereafter set it down to my reproach that I wasted an hour of a May morning in a denunciation of jargon, and in exhorting you upon a technical matter at first sight so trivial as the choice between abstract and definite words.

A lesson about writing your language may go deeper than language; for language (as in a former lecture I tried to preach to you) is your reason, your λόγος. So long as you prefer abstract words, which express other men's summarized concepts of things, to concrete ones which lie as near as can be reached to things themselves and are the first-hand material for your thoughts, you will remain, at the best, writers at second-hand. If your language be jargon, your intellect, if not your whole character, will almost certainly correspond. Where your mind should go straight, it will dodge: the difficulties it should approach with a fair front and grip with a firm hand it will be seeking to evade or circumvent. For the style is the man, and where a man's treasure is there his heart, and his brain, and his writing, will be also.

NAMES PRACTICAL AND POETIC*

MAX EASTMAN

(This chapter from Max Eastman's study of poetry is a valuable one for those who would write or appreciate literary English. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has told us that jargon is the result of using words according to some careless popular or professional custom, and that it may be avoided—and the vagueness it brings with it dissipated—if we think always of the primary or etymological meaning of the words we use. This is a practical argument for those who desire to write clear and forceful English. But Max Eastman, like L. P. Smith in his little essay on Magic, shows us that the poetical use of words depends likewise upon a knowledge of their fundamental meanings. We cannot employ a word metaphorically if we have forgotten or ignored its meaning by etymology. We cannot speak intelligently of a "patrician manner" if we do not know that the word "patrician" in Latin meant a member of the aristocracy, a descendant of one of the ancient *populous Romanus*.

Max Eastman, however, is at more pains to differentiate between the practical and the poetic use of language than he is to show that words, whether practical or poetic, must not be used after the manner of jargon. His explanation of the difference is a simple one. Whether you use language poetically or practically depends upon your intention. If it be that of analysis, you are using words practically. If it be that of registering a sense impression, the use is poetical. The distinction is similar to that often made between the two forms of writing, exposition and description. The former by a use of logic tears a thing

* From *Enjoyment of Poetry*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913.

apart in order to understand the relationship between its parts. The latter perceives the thing in its totality, and is concerned to note the impression its essential quality makes upon the senses of the observer. Herein lies the difference between calling water "wet" and calling it "H_2O," between speaking of the scarlet flash of a tanager and naming it the *piranga ludoviciana*.)

NAMES PRACTICAL AND POETIC

It is not in words that the distinction of the poetic from the practical begins. It lies not in books but in the protoplasm. And no doubt, if we knew enough, we need not begin even with people, but we could trace this cleavage of two motives back into the very birth of alertness in matter, and there see the one current scorning the other as to-day. For poetry is an attitude of the body. Both anteceding and transcending speech or idea, it is a way of experiencing realities.

And yet the realities that men experience, are in their nature very much determined by words; their names are a part of them. And this it is important for those who estimate poetry to understand. It is important for them to understand the nature of what we call "things"—that they are all, as we perceive them, unions of an external impression with something that memory contributes. A mere glimmer of flame through the air, for instance, and we have an *oriole flying;* an odd-shaped parallelogram with a white blotch upon it, and we perceive the *polished, square surface* of a *table.* Stand too near an oil painting and you can see how few daubs are required, so they be the right ones, to present to us an entire panorama of external reality. Nature herself presents, at any one time, little more than those same few daubs, and her whole triumphal evolution would be to us only a rank flux and confusion of fragmentary qualities if we did not perpetually amplify her intimations, and respond to them as things. Perhaps no one ever saw a farm, or a country, but a farm or a country can be both perceived and dealt with if the mind is active.

Yet either to perceive it or deal with it, without a name, is not easy. Names are a vital part of the contribution that memory

makes to things. They determine and carry with them all the rest—the imagery, the mood, the attitude, and activity. The right word is magic; it evokes for us out of the eternal fog whatever object is potential there, and puts us face to face in direct current of communication with it. It does this as no other power under the sun can do it. Is it not a question whether there could really be such a thing as a country until after there was a word for it? Take off the name, and I am not sure but the whole British Empire—that vast world-power—would vanish like a speculation, and you would have merely a number of people living some here and some there. Annihilate the word "love," and you would alter for many the quality of the very fabric of their lives. Such is the importance of names; they are close constituents of real things.

And every real thing has, or may have, two different kinds of names. It may have names which indicate a suitable adjustment to it, and names which engender a strong realization of it. The practical are always seeking the former names, and the poetic are always seeking the latter, and the distinction between them is eternal. It is rooted in the origin of tongues, and it branches in the highest apprehensions of metaphysics. Wherever a name is newly applied, we may ask and answer the question, is it applied with a predominantly poetic, or a predominantly practical intent?

Doubtless we have in ourselves experienced something like the original birth of a poetic word. We first got acquainted with cows by mooing, and with the wind by howling up his chimney, and sometimes still, when a blue-bottle circles round us on a summer noon, if we have nothing else to do we say "buzz," for no better reason than because he said it. And in some such way as this, thousands of years ago, upon the tongues of idle but appreciative savages, many little words and parts of words must have been born. Other little words are reported to have jumped right out of the mouths of these savages, when they were surprised or shocked by anything. And probably many of these

too, when they were afterward applied to the object that produced them, were applied with a poetic intent, an intent to renew that experience for its own sake. But of those words which arose—as it has been held that all speech arose—out of a song or grunt of action in unison, a kind of "yo-he-ho," naming the action first and then extended to the object acted upon, probably the majority were children of a practical necessity.

It is not poetic to extend the name that is part of an act to the object acted upon, because the object is not like the act. I believe that this is why the Teutonic languages retain, in defiance of the dictates of utility, a certain number of "strong verbs," or verbs which change their character radically by the time they reach the past participle, where they become names of an object. To *kill* is a vivid act, but to die is quite opposite, and therefore the associative flavor of the word *killed* is wrong. It is very weak, and we always want to help it; we want to say "killed *dead*," or something like that. *Shot*, on the contrary, sounds different from *shoot*, and is fit to receive the impact of it; it is a strong participle. The word *break* is intact and active, and *breaked* would be very much the same, but *broken* is in the condition it describes.

These are producings and modellings of the substance of words, but we must follow our distinction forward into another kind of creation—the creation of names by the new application or combination of old words. "Fire-water" is the name that the American Indians invented for whisky. And it is, when you pause to receive it, a very wonderful and quick metaphor. Yet we can hardly say whether it illustrates better the practical or poetic motive in word-making, whether it was given in prudence or delight. In the name that some Polynesian savages gave to an explorer's watch which curiously pleased them, we have surer signs of a poetic perception. "Moon," they called it, and when they were questioned why, they said that it was "round and stayed awake all night." But for examples of such poetry in the transfer and recombination of words we need not go

beyond what is obvious in our own language to-day, for within its recent history many names have been born, and still older ones retain the quality of their birth. *Buttercup* is a word of this kind. *Blue-eyed grass, golden-rod, fire-bird, dovetail, sky-scraper, ocean greyhound, pinchpenny, rakehell, swashbuckler, spitfire, kill-joy, slipgibbet,* are words of more or less rapt appreciation; while on the other hand *winter squash, Canada fox, ball-and-socket, office building, steamboat, railroad, money-saver, motor-cyclist,* justify themselves only by their utility.

Even the plainest-looking words will sometimes reveal, to one who likes them well enough to look for it, a lucid perception out of which they sprang. Sarcasm is "a tearing of the flesh." And we may contrast it, for our purpose, with *irony,* which means "saying little—saying less than you mean," one conveying an acute experience, the other a practical analysis. *Gymnasium* is "the place of nakedness." *Retort* is "a twisting back." *Enthusiast* is "full of God." *Night* is "death." And *nightingale* is "singer-in-the-night."

Such is the poetry which you find in the dictionary, the unpremeditated art of men for ages dead, whose utterance in a vivid moment rose to the heights of genius and could not be forgotten. It is the supreme model for all poetry, vital, democratic, inevitable, embodying the native forms under which man has beheld his visible world, and the subtle work of analogy by which he has blended that with the widening panorama of the spirit.

The same process will go on forever. In our own times every little while, out of a body of names which all suffer the flavor of disreputability and are called slang, the language stoops and picks up a gem. "You're a daisy," is an expression peculiarly akin to much of the poetry that already lies hidden in the forms of words. We can look forward to a time when in a changed language the flower may have another name, but still a man of that character will be a daisy, and no one will know why. *Squelch* and *grouch* and *butt in* are words which might, either for practical or poetic reasons, be lifted into good repute. In the

dialect of special cliques or professions, thieving, sailing, baseball, journalism, as well as in general slang, new names of both these kinds are continually born. A *hit*, and a *two-base hit*, and a *home run* are simply useful terms; but to *lean against the leather*, to *rap out a two-bagger*, to *zip it to the fence*, are superfluous and poetic expressions.

It is said that only those slang words which fill a vacancy are taken up into reputable discourse, but in reality literature is ever on the watch for terms which are peculiarly poignant or akin to their objects, and ready at any day to exchange for them an equivalent synonym. *Lurid* is a word exactly expressing the character of modern cheap newspapers, but it is not altogether living, and so in the first flush of their realization a new name came to the birth. They were *yellow*. And yet so strange is time, and so eternal is the perfection of a metaphor which is perfect, that if we turn back to the days when the word *lurid* itself was born and when it too joyfully lived, we find in it exactly the same poetry. It is *luridus*, a Latin word for "yellow."

The enduring character of the poetic instinct is further proven by the luxuriance and similarity in all ages of the language of vituperation. Poetry is the art of calling names, and, in the art of calling people bad names, not Homer, nor Shakespeare, who is the master, can excel the folk-lore upon which he builds. For acute realization of the vile qualities of men, and for scenic effects of the same character, we need not turn to our libraries. Though the scenic oath is scant among Anglo-Saxons, the scantness is more than compensated in southern Europe. Imagine a race which put as much energy of genius into the verbal realization of the tragic or sublime as the Spaniards or Neapolitans do into the nauseous and irreverent—most of our poetry books would have to hide their heads. And as it is, I believe that their authors could better learn their art here—in the language of loose wrath among the unlettered—than anywhere else, unless perhaps in the dictionary of etymology.

Some people think that the poetic are always talking symbol-

ism and endowing the sod with spiritual meaning. They do that, to be sure, because that is a great way to realize the sod and the spirit, but they also do the opposite. They daub the spirit. The most baneful degeneration to which names lend their aid is a poetic one. It is an excessive love of the imaginative realization of what is normally repulsive. Millions of so-called "stories" are current among men and women and children of which the climax is not humor but poetry, a vivid filth. And as the evening progresses you can observe this corruption creep into a group of story-tellers, while their humor expires.

Perhaps the reason why so many people will resent our calling these things, and others, poetic, is that they have got poetry sentimentally attached in their minds to a mysterious conception of the beautiful. They think that it implies a gush of harmonious numbers upon appropriate occasions, having especial regard to cliffs, maidens, hair, waves, pine-trees, the sea, the moon, and the ethereal significance of each. And the reason for this is that, excepting a few, the most variously poetic people do not write poems. It is usually only those of a certain romantic turn who care to separate names from their objects, and round them into the lyrical shape, and make of them a new object. But these objects when they are made are called *poems*, and thus the whole meaning of the word *poetic* is influenced by the preference their gentle authors have for such topics. In few minds to-day does the word poetic sit clear of this misfortune. But once learn to apprehend as such the poetic in every-day talk, and you will see that it is unlimited either to any range of objects or to any sweetness in handling them. It is simply the giving to any object, or thought, or event, or feeling, the name that makes its nature shine forth to you.

To call whisky "fire-water" is poetic, but it is also poetic, although with an admixture of humor, to say that Apollinaris is "the water that tastes like your foot's asleep." Both are true names. And in such lively expressions, words which perhaps never permanently unite with their object, but are called once

or twice and then forgotten forever—in them, poetry is living continually before us.

Imagine that there are two people walking along the beach in leisure where the sea resounds. "It sounds like eternity," says one. "Well," says the other, "it sounds to me more like shoveling coal down a chute." The contrast is perhaps sharp, but it is not extreme, for each has sensed and conveyed to the other in language the intrinsic quality of his experience. The deeper difference lies between them both and the man who, walking by the sea, does not name it for its sound at all, does not pause to receive the sound into his mind, but names it *brine*—water with a three and one-half per cent solution of natural salts which he might precipitate with a distillery and put to a profitable use. He is the practical man.

The conversation of the poetic is acute and exhilarating, waking you to the life and eminence in reality of all things. The conversation of the practical is instructive, interesting, sometimes full of surprise and a feeling of supreme possibility. For in its highest reach the practical application of names is nothing less than the external substance of scientific knowledge.

Those who are engaged in the quest of such knowledge, and who call it Pure Science, and scorn the application of its results to those purposes recognized in the popular use of the word "practical," will resist the appellation. But, nevertheless, their activity in the laboratory, or in their own minds, comparing, classifying, naming, is always directed toward an end, however arbitrary, which they have set before them, and is subject to the test of their achieving or failing to achieve that end. Wherever it is not mere mythology, science is to some degree practical in the accurate sense of the word. Even in those discursive studies which appear to be but a description of the species that occupy the earth, the classifications are made and the names applied always with a view to conduct, even though that conduct be merely mental. And it is only this that distinguishes their language from the language of the poetic.

Once more, imagine two people walking in leisure, and this time along the roadside. It is summer and the yellow-birds are holding their sprightly revels among the milkweed blossoms there, dancing along before them as they go.

"Regular little *butterflies,* aren't they?" says one.

"Yes," says the other faintly, and then, with emphasis: "It is the *American goldfinch,* you know—a *grosbeak.*"

These are the two ways of being, as we say, interested in the birds. They are the two ways of being interested in everything in the world and calling it by name. But in no other place will you find the opposition of poetic and practical terminology more exquisitely set forth than in the bird-neighbor books and wild-flower guides of modern times. There, side by side, you may read them—on the one line, labels picked from a language whose poetry is dead, and applied by earnest minds to serve the business of intellectual manipulation and accurate reference, and, on the other line, names bestowed in living syllables by the hearts of rural people in happy moments of carefree and vivid experience. Trailing Arbutus, Bouncing Bet, Dragon's Blood, Beggar's Buttons, Nose-bleed, Gay Feather, Heart-o'-the-earth, Ruby-throat, Firetail, Hell Diver, Solitary Vireo, Vesper Sparrow —these are the words for those who care but to feel and celebrate the qualities of things.

And in the lavish persistence, and in the truth, of these meadow names, holding their own against so much Latin, there is a lesson in humility for all science. It is about twenty-three hundred years now that scientific people have been constructing a world in systematic opposition to the world of the poetic, until in certain communities things have become exceedingly strained, and communication between those living in the two worlds is wellnigh impossible. Here is so simple and commonly regarded an object as water, for instance. The scientific have named it "H_2O." The poetic name it "wet"—not to say "babbling," "wild," and so forth. Each professes to name it with regard to its intrinsic and most real and final nature, and hence

arises the central problem of modern philosophy, and the great task of modern philosophy—to discover a mode of sociability between the extremes of the poetic and the practical world.

Is the right name of water *wet*, or is it H_2O? That is the great argument between them. And only in our own times has it begun to be clear that unto eternity neither side will ever give in, and that the only thing for persons to do who are in a hurry, or wish to be larger than either science or poetry, is to confess that it is probably both. Yet, after acknowledging this, those who came from the poetic side of the argument might be permitted to stipulate that, if there is to be any doubt allowed as to the correctness of either name, that doubt shall cling to the scientific one. For since science arises out of the impulse to alter and achieve, and poetry out of the very love of the actual, there is more danger that science will build too much intellectual stuff into things, than that poetry will. Science inevitably idealizes; poetry is primarily determined to realize. The poetic name points to the object, the practical name points from the object. And if there were to be a crisis between them, if all feeling and all endeavor were suddenly to cease, and the dispassionate material of each long-suffering reality somehow to move forward and declare itself, I think that the name this one would most surely declare, upon that day of the death of metaphysics, would be "wet." It might even be "babbling," not to say "wild."

One thing is certain, however, and that is that we need not soon anticipate such a day, nor hope for the death of metaphysics. And in the meantime, which is forever, the key and the solution, the only one that mortals will find, of the conflict within them between these two kinds of names, is to decline to regard them as rivals, but, taking their difference to be a difference between two impulses of life, to avail themselves upon the appropriate occasions of each.

"Effulgence of bright essence increate" is a name that John Milton gave to light. He gave it, perhaps, in the pain and ecstasy of vivid remembrance, in blindness. At least he sought with all

his power to convey, enriched by intellect, the naïve sense of the being of light. In the same century a different but equally supreme genius, Isaac Newton, following the Greeks, gave to light the name "corpuscular emission." He gave it in his laboratory, in the mature activity of an intense mind bent upon learning the terms in which the world is to be dealt with. Now, both these high efforts, Milton's as poetry and Newton's as science, may be said to have failed. Milton did not convey a sense of the being of light, fundamentally because light is not similar to the Latin language; and Newton did not learn entirely well to deal with light, because it is not very similar to corpuscles. But does not this make all the more obvious the folly of our becoming exercised over the conflict between them, as though the world were not large enough and time long enough to hold both Milton and Newton, and others who shall in part supersede or excel them both?

Only when the practical usurps the empire of the poetic, or the poetic denies an ultimate sanction to the practical, do they become rivals—rivals for a supremacy that no real names can have. For there is a large democracy in nature. The world itself is not dogmatic. It both lends its support to a number of practical assumptions, and consents to be in some measure what any poetic mind perceives it. The mind, in truth, does not impose itself upon a world of other things, but is itself a part of things so far as they engender experience. The poetic impulse is a love of that experience for its own sake. Poetic creation begins in us when we marry, with such love, the images of memory to the impressions of sense, and when to this union we set the seal of a vivid and communicable name we are poets in the full and divine sense. We are makers of a world. For if there is any creation in all history, poetic names are creators. And the man who lives his life in apathy or expeditious indifference to them—the world will never attain a full being in that man's experience.

THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE*

PAUL SHOREY

(The question comes up for discussion nowadays whether we do not possess an American language which has become essentially different from the standard English of British usage. Mr. Mencken believes we do. Out of our slang, he thinks, have grown new idioms that are being sanctioned in our written language, but are not being adopted in England. Professor Shorey, however, in this article, disagrees. He admits the influence of slang. But he points out that there is a British slang as well as an American, that in both countries though some of this slang gets into the written language most of it is ephemeral and wholly oral, that owing to the widespread use of books to-day, the wholly oral language counts for less, when we come to write, than the language we find in books, and that the changes in written English which are going on in either Great Britain or the United States do not make for the growth of separate languages since they are known in both countries and consequently tend to be practised on both sides of the Atlantic.

Professor Shorey is professor of Greek at the University of Chicago, and with Dean West of Princeton a leading advocate of the humanizing influence of classical studies. As a humanist he is careful to make it clear that the well-spring of our language is not slang, but our historical English literature and its own source in the classical languages. Slang only nibbles at this inherited literary language, adding the little of its own in compensation for the little that it takes away, and is not itself its foundation or its substance. Professor Shorey's essay is replete

* From *Academy Papers*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925.

with such general statements about our language as these. But they are liable to be ignored by a reader of the essay since he becomes absorbed in Professor Shorey's fascinating lists of idioms, understood and misunderstood, some of which will amuse us, others send us to our dictionaries.)

THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE

Critics sometimes recommend the style in which it is possible to tell the truth. But the greatest masters of prose, a Plato, a Renan, warn us that the very conditions of the art of writing necessitate an admixture of what Plato calls play and Renan deception. The essayist, the lecturer, cannot march like the mathematician unswervingly to his goal. If he could, I should simply tell you that the most that we or any academy can do for the preservation of the purity of the English language in America is to try to be somewhat less careless in our own speech and writing and to advocate the effective teaching of English literature together with at least a little Latin in all schools and colleges. To this conclusion I shall try to lead you. But if I am to fill the hour and fulfil your expectations I must play with some of the topics that are traditionally associated with the general theme.

The two chief topics which our subject presents for feuilletonistic development are the merry war about Americanisms between ourselves and our English cousins and the analogous debate at home between the purists and the advocates of a freer use of slang, neology, and familiar colloquial idiom. Both could be summed up and definitively adjudicated in pertinent quotations from Emerson, Holmes, and Lowell. But what then would become of this discourse?

It is only the very naïf who will take either controversy quite seriously. No educated man can believe that under modern conditions of communication and so long as we read a common literature and pay British lecturers five hundred dollars a night the slight divergences in vocabulary and idiom between us and the British will in any foreseeable time constitute a difference of

language. And none but sciolists intoxicated by pseudo-science will infer from the formation of the romance languages out of Latin, that the language of George Ade, Chimmie Fadden, of "Deer Mable," Shorty MacCabe and Mr. Lawson's "Frenzied Finance,"—the "shouldn't ought's," the "should of knews," and the "the something else agains" of Abe and Mawruss, of Mr. John Weaver's poems in American and the short stories of Mr. H. C. Wilmer are the embryonic stages in the equivocal generation of a new tongue out of the corruption of English speech on American soil. This might conceivably happen if we were shut off from all communication with England or if we were destined to live for centuries under a Japanese "Norman Conquest." But the conceivability of such a cataclysmic change is no ground for assuming that it is likely to happen, still less for wishing it to happen. Mr. Mencken, in his recent useful but somewhat journalistic and bitterly propagandist book on the American language, cannot really mean this, though his anti-British sentiments and his hatred of professors betray him into saying it. Mr. Mencken and the many others whom he may be taken to represent are merely expressing in more popular emphasis that exasperation with purists, professors, and academic pedants which informs with witty and righteous indignation the writings of Professor Lounsbury and Professor Matthews. He wishes us to feel how remote from the seething life of America are those who in the still air of their studies discuss theories of style and niceties of expression, how impotent they are to affect by their recommendations or taboos the actual usage of the street. But so much we may cheerfully concede. Our doubts would begin only if Mr. Mencken seriously desired to widen the gulf between academic and popular speech by abandoning, as some doctrinaires virtually would have us do, all effort to teach correct English in the schools.

But, deplorable as we may deem the wide prevalence of slovenly and slangy speech and the actual encouragement of it in the schools by mistaken theories of language masquerading

as science, there is not really the slightest danger that these tendencies will result in the establishment of a new language. The analogies of the Romance languages, of the German dialects, of the rivalry between the literary and the popular speech in modern Greece do not apply. In vain philological science affirms that the language of literature is an artificial creation and the real life of language is in the actual speech of the masses. The conditions have changed—"We air a reading people, sir," as Martin Chuzzlewit was told long ago. It is not true, as a recent text-book of English affirms, that the history of a language is merely the record of the practical every-day speech of successive generations. And so long as our present civilization survives it will never be possible to draw a sharp line of demarcation at any point between the linguistic habits of scholarly or academic persons and those of the controlling majority of middle-class Americans who listen to the oratory of Mr. Bryan, yawn through lectures and commencement addresses, read the editorials of Mr. Brisbane and the poems of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, and amuse their leisure with American novels from Mrs. Wharton and Mr. Sinclair Lewis to Mr. Dreiser and Mr. Harold Bell Wright. These people may be careless and slovenly in speech. They may be impatient of the school-mastering of purists or academic dictation. Their children may for a few years discourse almost wholly in slang. They may themselves understand it, enjoy its piquancy, and frequently lapse into it. They do not really recognize it as the language of America any more than French readers mistake the lively idiom of "Gyp." for normal French. Mr. Colby somewhere says that there is no fun in seeing Mr. Bernard Shaw knock ideas down unless you have first met them standing up. Half the piquancy of dialect stories and of the licenses of the so-called American language resides in its felt deviation from a norm, as the response even of movie audiences to bad grammar in the legends of the screen suffices to show.

The readers of literary experiments in this language are not the masses but those who are better able to feel this piquancy.

It was not Whittier but the scholarly Lowell who composed poems in a Yankee dialect. The newspapers, the novels, the popular weeklies that form the greater part of the national reading, and Mr. Mencken's own book, are not written in his American language. Their style, with all its defects, is in the main normal English, if not English of distinction and charm. And, though it absorbs elements from below, it is, no matter how angrily it may repudiate them, more influenced by criticism and suggestion from above. The American people still feel the charm of good English, as Cicero maintained that the Roman populace appreciated good Latin when they heard it from his lips. And, though audiences applaud the vivacity of slang, and sometimes, like the old darky deacon, are thankful "to be fed from a low crib," they prefer real English for all serious occasions and from all dignified and truly representative persons. A senator may say, as a senator did, "And he gets away with it. That's what gets my goat," or he may speak, as a senator does, of a "venial sin" when he means "unpardonable." But the people would not like a slangy or slovenly speaking President of the United States. The language of Webster, Lincoln, Garfield, Roosevelt, and Wilson is for them the language of Burke, Canning, Bright, Gladstone, and Bryce. As Lowell said, in what was nearly his final word: "The purity, the elegance, the decorum, the chastity of our mother tongue are a sacred trust in our hands. I am tired of hearing the foolish talk of an American variety of it, about our privilege to make it what we will because we are a majority. . . . The English of Abraham Lincoln was so good not because he learned it in Illinois, but because he learned it of Shakespeare and Milton and the Bible, the constant companions of his leisure." Despite this warning, Mr. Mencken adds himself to the list of those who take Lincoln's name in vain by citing him as a precursor (or is it a protagonist?) of the new American language. He forgets that one of Lincoln's greatest oratorical triumphs turned on a distinction which we are told the new teaching of English abandons. "We will not secede, and you shall not."

The Anglo-American merry war began very early. An American girl forerunner of those who later, as Mark Twain puts it, "stuffed M. Bourget" at Newport informed Chastellux that America, having cast off the British yoke, intended to form a free and independent language by mixing Hebrew and the Indian dialects in equal proportions. And Noah Webster, who didn't quite mean it, exhorted his compatriots to "seize the present moment and establish a national language as well as a national government."

Apart from the question of slang, which is a later development, nearly all the points in the apologies for Americanisms made by Lowell, Senator Lodge, Professor Brander Matthews, and a host of minor essayists are to be found in old President Dwight's "Travels in New England" at the end of the eighteenth century, in the essays and prefaces of Noah Webster, and in the articles of *The North American Review* about 1820. An experienced reader is familiar with all the topics, with every move in the game. There is first the necessity of new words for new things, as "prairie"—

> The unshorn fields boundless and beautiful
> For which the speech of England has no name.

There is the topic of the British tourist who is looking for Americanisms and exults when he finds them. The Englishman in Howells's *Lady of the Aroostook* infers the keen intellectual curiosity of Americans from the girl's phrase, "I want to know," as some British idealists argued from the American doughboy's "This is a hell of a war, but it's the only one we've got" that the Americans were consciously fighting a war to end war. Mr. Howells's Englishman is delighted with locomotive for engine. He prizes beyond its worth the word cowcatcher, and he is disconcerted by Lydia's unresponsive blankness to the remark that a certain dish on the table had a "pretty tall smell," a phrase he had heard a Kentuckian use of the Venetian canals. "I suppose you'd call me a blarsted Britisher," he said. "No, I

shouldn't call you so," replied Lydia. "Ah, yes," he returned, "the Americans always disavow it, but I don't mind it at all. You know I like these native expressions." This is true to type. A friend of Lord Bryce, traveling with him in California, notes in his journal at the Ocean House, "Bryce is perfectly happy. He has heard an American say Európean three times in the hotel lobby."

To this topic the American retort courteous is the well-worn list of cockneyisms and Briticisms: directly, different to, "giddy lot I care," "told him off," "can't act for nuts," "don't expect to do any good," "frightfully decent," "detrimental," "frightfully bucked," "slimy-looking blighter," "haven't the foggiest," "he's selling me a packet" the—"stony," "the not half," "the filthy," and the dropped h's, "the narsty," and "the ripping lot of stinks." Noah Webster protested that his conservative purpose was to protect the purity of American English against the more rapid progress of innovation and corruption in Great Britain. And Howells, with some failure of his usual amenity, once lapsed into the counter-check quarrelsome that "If we wrote the best English in the world, probably the English themselves would not know it."

To this he may have been provoked by the British reviewer's habit of stigmatizing as an Americanism any vivacity or (to him) novelty of expression in an American book. It is a dangerous practice for the sciolist, and such reviewers are often hoist by their own petard. In this matter I hold the record and my one example may serve for all. Somewhere in an edition of Horace I use without quotation-marks as a latent and familiar quotation the phrase "full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene," from Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale." A scholarly English reviewer said that it was a pity that the otherwise respectable literary quality of the book was marred by a few deplorable Americanisms such as—and for his sins he picked upon "the blushful Hippocrene" as his chief example. This, although too good to be true, actually happened.

Again, there is the American scholar's game, begun by Dwight and Noah Webster, if not earlier, and practised by Lowell, Lodge, Richard Grant White, Lounsbury, Mr. Brander Matthews, and others, of discovering Americanisms and American slang in the older English literature. The first two pages of "Hamlet" present "I say" and "Well, good-night." Shakespeare also has "good-night" in the slang sense, and in "Timon of Athens" repeatedly uses "touched" in its financial signification. "I guess," "it is no lye," "All right," and "Come off" are in Chaucer. "Cold feet" is in Ben Jonson; "happened out" in Drayton; "nobody at home" in Pope; and "fire out" in Shakespeare's "Sonnets." "Our ancestors," said Lowell, "unfortunately could bring over no better English than the English of Shakespeare." In reply, Mr. Whibley affirms that our claim to have preserved Elizabethan English rests on three words only: *fall, gotten,* and *bully*. And Mr. Mencken argues that such isolated instances prove nothing because slang resides not in the phrase itself but in its misuse as a cliché. That may be true, scientifically speaking, but the examples cited and others of their kind are perfectly good debaters' points in reply, either to British hypercriticism or to the false science of his own argument that the divergences of American vocabulary and idiom constitute or are likely to develop a new language.

Lastly, there is the inexhaustible theme of British misapprehensions and of the quaint attempts of British novelists and satirists to represent the speech of Americans or to employ American slang. A few years ago one of the most entertaining of modern English writers, Mr. E. V. Lucas, commented on the word "highbrow" in the following literal-minded fashion: "He was not what the Americans call a highbrow, but it was such a forehead as often goes with men of swift intelligence. It was very white." A Canadian colonel remarked to a British general, "My men are from Missouri and have to be shown," and it almost cost the British general a stroke of apoplexy to discover how a Canadian officer's men could come from Missouri. Andrew

Lang, reading in O. Henry about a "spaghetti joint," remarked plaintively, "I didn't know that spaghetti had joints," and Emerson tells in his journal of an Englishman who was going for a sleigh-ride on a cold day: "Shall I put in a buffalo?" asked the livery-stable keeper. "My God, no, put in a horse, man," cried the appalled Englishman. "The single word 'rats,' " says the "New English Grammar," "may stand for a whole sentence—as in Browning's 'Pied Piper of Hamelin,' line 10." Quite so! And honest British logic has changed "I should worry" into "I should not worry," which is indisputably the meaning.

The literary tradition that such anecdotes illustrate began early and still continues. Captain Basil Hall infers that the Yankees have no sense of humor because to his condescending observation that they had many thunderstorms in New England a native replied "Yas, we do considerin' the size of the population." Mrs. Trollope's "Dialogue on a Shirt" in the American language is wholly off the key, and the attempts of modern novelists and playwrights to parody or apply "those forcible American expressions" for which Mr. Archer confessed an unholy relish are much funnier than they themselves will ever know. Mr. Archibald Marshall and others use "up against" in the sense of "unfriendly to." Another writer makes the Americans say, "You can hang the goods on them" for "catch them with the goods"; the impecunious hero of another says, "I haven't got what you Americans call a red nickel." Bertha Ruck takes "get away with it" to mean "put up with it." Ian Hay writes "the Englishman was a knockout, disparaging everything. The American was a booster." Mr. Galsworthy still thinks "they're on their uppers" means "they are angry." Mr. Chesterton is baffled by "she says you're a regular guy." Mr. Birmingham affects to misunderstand "lay out the laundry right now," and is genuinely puzzled by "are you through with the cereal?" The Manchester *Guardian* was perhaps not quite sincere when, commenting on Mr. Brander Matthews's "calamity howler," it said, "we have never met the word and cannot divine to what it applies." And

a British lecturer who told us that "Hittite is a science on the make" ("in the making"?) was perhaps better inspired than he knew.

The satire even of the comparatively successful Oscar Wilde, Ian Hay, H. G. Wells, W. L. George, to take a few names at random, is rather crude and obvious. Its staple is guess, reckon, gotten, noos, fix, back of, strike (a place), and "you can search me, as Ella Wheeler Wilcox or one of those high-souled American writers said in a moment of exaltation." Mr. Britling's boy who boasts of his knowledge of the American language produces in evidence only "Oh Hell, Gol darn you, ouch, Gee whizz, Sic him, Maude, It's up to you, Duke," which is hardly above the level of the comic columns' conversation between the doughboy and the French damsel who could "spik a leetle English." Mr. Galsworthy's American, in "The Little Man," does somewhat better. He displays "guess, real mean, how did it eventuate, played it pretty low down, Gawd's airth, but I'm tellin' you."

As a rule, however, the boldness of American metaphor disconcerts the "Britisher," and the particularities of local contemporary and familiar allusion naturally escape him as they do the unprepared reader of Aristophanes. This is not conceding the existence of the so-called American language. The thesis of pseudo-science that American idiom or American slovenliness is the fecund chaos of a new linguistic creation, is for the British tourist and reviewer only an expression of his distaste for a few American innovations, or his amusement at American slang. With wilful exaggeration he calls the American "a brother hedged with alien speech." "You speak another tongue than mine, though both are English born," writes Robert Louis Stevenson. And Kipling, with characteristic hyperbole, says "the American that I have heard is a tongue as distinct from English as Patagonian. It has nothing in common with ours except the auxiliary verbs, the name of the creator, and damn." Their royalties from American readers prevent them and us from taking these *boutades*

seriously. But the Germans thought they meant it, and it needed a world war to undeceive them.

These sallies will mislead only when they are mistaken for science. Few of us know the technical words of our neighbor's job or profession. We do not therefore say that he speaks a different language. And no more significance attaches to the fact that we do not fully understand British cricket talk, or the schoolboy slang of Kipling's *Stalky and Co.*, or the ecclesiastical terminology of Trollope's and Archibald Marshall's novels and *The Cathedral*, while they would be puzzled by our baseball slang, or the talk in "Stover of Yale," or in stories of the jazz age. The divergence between our and their musical, railway, and telephone terminology on which so much stress has been laid is, as is our slang, mainly an affair of metaphor. The American in London must accustom himself to "put me through to," and the Englishman may for a moment be puzzled by "her best feller hung up on her" in an American story. We "switch the freight train," where they "shunt the goods train." But such variations no more tend to create a new language than does the temporary use of "sundowner" in one sense in Australia, and another in Washington, or the fact that "I get you, Steve" is said to be in Australian "I gather you, Gertie." Mr. Mencken instances among American words unintelligible to the English, "side-stepper," "salt-water taffy," "Prince Albert," "book," "bar-tender," "kidding." He might as well have called the new compounds of Pindar and the quips and coinages of Aristophanes the beginnings of a new Greek language.

Many words in any list of current Americanisms would have been unknown to our grandfathers and will be strange to our grandsons. They are accidents of fashion, like words that come and go in Australia or Canada, without affecting essential English. And there is no idiom or slang of any part of the English-speaking world that the accidents of travel or a successful book, speech, play, or movie may not convey to any other part. Mr. Mencken says that our soldiers adopted little from the British,

not even "carry on," and "wangle." But our reading and traveling classes have taken over "carry on," "sorry," "of sorts," etc., and our novelists freely employ "wangle," "blighter," "bounder," "I could do with," "I'm not taking any."

So far as these exaggerations have any meaning they refer to the new American slang, not to those variations that, according to his temperament, annoy or amuse the tourist: Baggage luggage, cracker biscuit, elevator lift, store shop, coal coals, dry goods draper, apothecary chemist, grain corn, yard area, pep bounce, hardware shop ironmonger, married rich, married money, America the States, Americans the Americans, and the rest. It is the slang that exasperates Lord Theign in Henry James's novel, when he declines to read an American letter "because it was a tissue of expressions that may pass current over counters and in awful newspapers in that extraordinary world or country, but that I decline to puzzle out here." But slang, though it may ultimately feed and renew idiom, is not in its inception an essential part of any language. It is in the mass a temporary fashion of metaphor, familiar allusion, ellipsis, and implication. American slang, if we may distinguish it from Americanisms, is only a fashion of the past fifty or sixty years. Its allusiveness is understood by the homogeneous *public* created by telegraph, railway, radio, newspaper press, and standardization, as the personal hits of Aristophanes were apprehended by the *crowd* in the theater of Dionysus. Its metaphor is often a quickening of forgotten etymologies and runs parallel to the speech patterns of such idiomatic languages as French and Greek. Aristophanes and Plautus and, for that matter, Plato are full of American slang. There are perfectly good Greek and Latin equivalents for near beer, fall down, looking for trouble, poker face, it's up to you, first off, that's the limit, I should worry, a good thing, who was your dog last year? The unconscious genius of the people no more invents slang than it invents epics. It is coined in the sweat of their brow by smart writers who, as they would say, "are out for the coin." It originated for the most part in the

literary exploitation by Bret Harte and Mark Twain of the special cant and lingo of the pioneer, the miner, the cowboy, and similar groups. But it was developed through imitation and exaggeration of the style of Dickens, who is one of the chief creators of the American language, though as a British tourist he mocked at it and even pretended not to understand "breakfast right away." Only the other day a journalistic admirer of Dickens coined "pull an Oliver Twist."

We should misapprehend our British cousins as grossly as they sometimes misunderstand us if we took too seriously their denunciations of the American language. The corruption of the English language by the American invasions is a pleasant theme for epigrams and essays. One such article enumerates the vicious locutions which the American movies are introducing to England. But the official war films of the British Government exhibited the legends *tankadrome* and *supercede* with a *c*. And recent English writers adopt vivid and idiomatic American slang as fast as they are able to understand and assimilate it. "To reject a forcible Americanism" pleads Mr. Archer, "merely because we could at a pinch get along without it is to sin our mercies." Mr. Balfour uses "give ourselves away," Mr. Hugh Walpole "kid," Sir Philip Gibbs says "I was peeved"; Mr. Galsworthy uses "make good," and says that "if America gets a swelled head the world will get cold feet"; Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch uses "rubber-neck"; so pure a writer as Mr. Archibald Marshall permits himself to use "it's the limit," "it's up to us," and "That's the thing we're up against"; Mr. Lowes Dickinson writes "Nothing doing, in the expressive American phrase," and I heard him misuse "stand for" without apologies. Mrs. Humphry Ward uses "proposition" as a word of all work. Mr. Locke speaks of being "up against a tough proposition," and of being "knocked into a cocked hat." Mr. Masefield attributes "cough up," in the slang sense "pay," to a seventeenth-century speaker. Mr. Archer says that Austria was "out for blood," and talks of "backing her for all she was worth." Professor Gilbert Murray

translates "Let the war rip," and speaks of "having the time of their lives." Bluff has found international acceptance; Mr. Bernard Shaw calls a dentist an "ivory snatcher." The puzzled Englishman in *The Lady of the Aroostook,* asks Lydia: "When you say, 'you never did,' do you know what is the full phrase?" But Matthew Arnold's comment on one of Tennyson's later poems is "Did you ever?"

To the dazed foreigner the newspaper headline is the quintessence of Americanese. I will not dwell upon the "Three Chocolate Drops" and the notorious "Jerked to Jesus" which three mendacious French travelers at intervals of several years affirmed that they themselves saw in a Chicago newspaper. A Toledo headline a few years ago read "Thug Golden-Ruled." How can the visiting Englishman be expected to know that this means Criminal Pardoned? The Chicago *Tribune* once headed a column "Bat Trails Hee-Haw," and I doubt if even Mr. Brander Matthews or President Stanley Hall could have translated that at sight into: "The former lightweight champion pugilist familiarly known as Battling Nelson had gone in pursuit of his strayed donkey." An English critic stigmatizes as meaningless the line "Chicago Crooks Pervaded the Town Yesterday. They were shadowed." He adds: "It is quite possible to take up a paper in the far West and read column after column of its contents with merely a vague general impression." But I am not sure that all Americans would understand "The Fans Don't Care for Clinches in Deep Foliage"; "Purple Coach Forced to Use Midget Backs"; "Some Tank That Wren."

This language amuses us, and we are proud of it. It is, to describe it in the terms of one of its speakers, "crisp concise verbiage." It gives us the sense of initiation that as schoolboys we enjoyed in the invention of a private cipher for the gang. It unites us in a fellowship of democratic revolt against the pedant, the purist, and the highbrow. "When the chaplain said, 'Sure,' we knew he was the high sort," begins a war story in the *Saturday Evening Post.* It differentiates us from the supercilious

and slow-witted Englishman who cannot understand it. Hence our relish of the anecdotes that exhibit his bewilderment, and our pride in the quick-witted American girl who baffles the British nobleman and teaches the German prince the true American language. Similar are the anecdotes of the American who cabled New York from Berlin, "Kale all gone. Wire thirty beans at once," and was arrested for telegraphing in cipher. Or the story of Gregory's cryptic cablegram to Hoover: "Had Archie on the carpet at eleven. Put him through the hoops at four." Our pride in this sort of thing is natural perhaps but a little naïve, for the quick-wittedness on which we plume ourselves depends mainly on our greater familiarity with the field of our own metaphors and our own allusiveness. The British do not can but tin peaches. So when the Britisher asks the California girl, "What do you do with all that fruit?" and she replies to his bewilderment, "We eat all we can and what we can't we can," Mr. Mencken is flattered in his conviction that we have here the germs of that genuine American speech that British gold and British propaganda cannot corrupt. This insensitiveness of the British mind sometimes has its compensations. No American scholar would dare to translate Sophocles, "Antigone," 767, as Jebb did, "A youthful mind when stung is fierce." And the American novelist who writes sentimentally of "eager boys who might have told girls love and been stung," exposed himself to the anti-climax of the question "Women, wasp, or fate?"

We, however, resent the tutoring of the purists and "linguistic prudes" who forbid us these attractive and up-to-date modes of speech. And because some such prohibitions are mere prejudices and personal antipathies we jump to the conclusion that all are. Because in a living language it is impossible to draw the precise line infallibly between good and bad usage, we infer that there is no distinction and that one way of speech is always as good as another.

"Say now, Shibboleth," was the text of an entertaining article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, which taught that all traditions

of correct English are as merely the prejudices of social and tribal exclusiveness as was the old Hebrew test. "Verbal taboos" is the title of a clever paper by a prominent and progressive professor of English, which insinuates that all proscriptions of bad and prescriptions of good English are as arbitrary as the superstitious taboos of South Sea Islanders. And another popular professor, author of a book on modern English that has found wide acceptance, defends "If I was you," the split infinitive, the dangling participle, "Who do you mean?" "This data is," "This phenomena," and "This tablet with the window above are a tribute of admiration." "Good English," he concludes, "is any English that hits the mark." The charity of this mantle covers Mr. Dreiser, who writes, "He breakfasted as poorly as the night before," and Mr. Ernest Poole, who says, "When still a girl in her twenties, her father took her abroad." We know what they mean, their English can hit the mark of a barn door.

This controversy between the purists and the latitudinarians would be, like the Anglo-American debate that we have been considering, merely a merry war of epigrams and paragraphs, were it not for two or three considerations that make the preservation of the purity of English speech a graver and more difficult task here than it has yet become in England. We are as a people more careless in our speech than the English. Our sense of idiom and feeling for the meaning of words is confused by the presence among us of a huge unassimilated population to whom English is not their native tongue. The sciolism and the false or perverted taste of the half-educated or the wrongly educated expatiate with greater freedom in journalism and the councils of education here than there.

All of these statements may be challenged by militant Americanism, but sober reflection will, I think, confirm them. Lowell, Lounsbury, Mr. Brander Matthews, Mark Twain, and Howells by selection of types and classes could make out a very plausible debater's case in retort upon the English. But I suspect that they had misgivings in their hearts. Lowell, indeed, in other

moods, expressed them. In spite of Cockney dialects, the inarticulateness of the British hero in Anglo-American novels, and the limited vocabulary of the stage "noble Lord," it is probably true that the educated Englishman expresses himself in sounder idiom and more discriminating choice of words than the American of the same class. He is, perhaps, less likely to fall into such locutions as the following, which I have recently observed without going in quest of them. "I don't want to infringe on your goods." "Sat at the feet of a galaxy." "The personal equation was scrupulously avoided." "If not true, it has a certain vermicellitude." "The road will become infeasible." "It was greatly minimized." "The wives of the soldiers have already received their allocution." "Sinai was a stickler too." "The most titantic battle." "She was a novitiate for three years." "He waived her to a chair." "He was disconcerted with my conduct." "The soldiers were arraigned for battle." This slovenliness is by no means confined to the illiterate. Not to speak of statesmen and presidents of the United States, I have heard teachers of English, learned professors and eminent "educators" say "the man laid down," "like he did," "much water has flown under the bridges," speak of "helping out on the housing proposition," of a "prosperity predicated on," of "the training of novitiates," of a "phenomenon that transpired," and pronounced ampho'ra, stigma'ta, ex cathē'dra, take pre'cĕdence of.

The British feel this instinctively, and in the merry war of epigram and satire, they score quite as effectively as we. There is no more palpable hit in the American literature of the subject than the fair American tourist in *Punch*, who when she flicked away her fly, screamed to the dazed Scotch gilly, "Say, shepherd, I guess a fish has sucked the bug off of my string." And I myself heard a Vancouver chauffeur rebuke an American damsel who wanted to know the significance of the tails worn by a passing company of Highlanders, "What you call the tiles, madam, are the sporran." The speech of the American at the Oxford dinner in Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* is carica-

ture, but inspired caricature. "Duke," he said, "I guess I am voicing these gentlemen when I say that your words show up a good heart all the time. Your mentality is bully, as we all predicate." Still deeper cuts the retort of the English officer who, when an American, before we went in, watching the battle exclaimed, "Some fight," replied, "Some don't."

The carelessness of Americans and their half-serious adoption of the latest slang puzzles not only the British but travelers from every nation, whose educated men respect the national speech. They don't know how to define the social status of persons whose language contrasts so strangely with their dress, table manners and ways of life. They cannot reconcile the dainty manners and exquisite dress of the American girl with the odd idiom that issues from her ruby lips. I myself heard one such say in the Yosemite, "I'd have been a good rider if I'd rid more," to which her friend replied, "If I'd knowed I could of rode, I would of went." Thus it is that European travelers from De Tocqueville to Ernest Von Wolzogen accept literally the half-teasing, half-serious affirmation of the Englishman that American is another language. They all feel competent to discuss the topic, and many of them imitate the prudent abstraction of Tocqueville, who composed an entire chapter of generalizations without quoting one English or American expression. I once to my shame confirmed this prejudice in the German mind, when, reverting to the custom of my Iowa boyhood, I called a railway station a "deepo" to the bewilderment of a Hamburg professor of English.

We flatter ourselves that in thus habitually letting ourselves go we still retain control and can recur to the well of English undefiled when we will. But in spite of the optimism of my introduction I am not sure. The Encyclopædia Britannica defines slang as a conscious offense against some conventional standard of propriety, and that was the attitude that I attributed to the average middle-class American. But I have seen indications of late that the new generation is unaware of any distinction between different kinds of English, and that no incongruity of

juxtaposition or disharmony of tone offends its sensibilities. The citizens of East St. Louis intended to express themselves in language appropriate to a dignified occasion when they announced that they had invited a number of prominent speakers to "felicitate and boost" the inaugural of a new mayor. A candidate for the doctorate in philosophy in Greek at a leading American university, criticizing a Greek play on her examination paper, wrote in all innocence: "Phædra put the nurse next to the tragedy of her unlawful love." The contributors to *The Saturday Evening Post* frequently and doubtless often intentionally mix their styles in this fashion: "riding herd on gangsters from dawn to dewy eve," "hard-boiled reactionaries Tories of purest race serene." It is only a step from this to the babu English of "The beloved faces on which he had not seen the soft fascinating beams of a simper for many a grim-visaged year."

Such examples easily multiplied prove nothing unless our own observation tells us that they are typical. In any case the comparative correctness of British and American speech is not our main concern. The purity of our own speech is unquestionably threatened by the two influences at which we have glanced, an unassimilated foreign population and the ponderous jargon in practice and confident dogmatism in theory of pseudo-science.

The examples given in this paper are not intended to be taken in general disparagement of modern American English. It would be easy to select other quotations in support of the contention that the American prose of to-day and of yesterday has been singularly successful in combining idiomatic and colloquial ease, point, and vivacity with conformity to all the essential traditions of pure and correct English. The beautiful prose of Howells, not excessively praised by Mark Twain, would alone suffice. Our illustrations merely point to tendencies which, unchecked by criticism and the betterment of education, will impair the purity of our speech and the sanity of our style. We teach too many subjects too superficially, we teach too much of the pseudo-

sciences, and begin the study of them too early. We encourage immature and unprepared minds to debate unsettled and unsettling problems before we have put them in possession of their rightful heritage in the world's central tradition of beauty and common sense. And in our teaching of the literary and linguistic studies that are the best corrective of the narrowness of science and the best sedative for the insanity of pseudo-science, instead of driving directly at the main ends of culture and discipline, we too often waver between the opposite extremes of dilettantism and the scholasticism of irresponsible speculation and premature research. But our present concern is not education in general but education so far as it bears on the conservation and the improvement of American English. And to that end we should teach more English literature and Latin and teach them by saner and simpler methods.

The systematic study of good English literature in all schools will do more than any other agency to unify the speech and sentiment of our polyglot and heterogeneous population, and to preserve the degree of mutual intelligence and sympathy between the British Empire and America that is indispensable to the maintenance of civilization. English literature, as Emerson points out, penetrates the speech and life of the people that created it as no other literature of Europe does. This study will release the student from the exclusive domination of the importunate present reflected in the newspaper and the fashions of the literature of the hour. It will insensibly enlarge his vocabulary, familiarize him with the genuine moulds of English expression, and create the speech instincts that will in the end select from the temporary vogues of slang and picturesque colloquialisms only the expressions that will constitute a real enrichment of idiom. But rightly guided it will do more than this. Taught as the classics were sometimes taught, it is a training in interpretation that becomes an exercise in expression. Meaningless writing results from a habit of treating words in superficial reading and in the text-books of pseudo-science as if they had no meaning.

There is no better tonic for this mental laxity than the critical reading of good texts under guidance that demands the ascertainment of the writer's precise meaning. This is not less true because Ruskin has somewhere said it more eloquently. It is training of this kind and not chatter about Harriet and the chastity of Keats' mother, or emotional discourse about the life of the spirit in English poetry that we should seek in the study of English literature. It might seem superfluous to harp on so obvious a truism were it not that many of the most conspicuous "educators" in the country are inculcating precisely the contrary doctrine. They urge the substitution of the newspaper, the popular magazine, the short story, and the new poetry of free verse for such dead and difficult classics as Wordsworth, Burke, Tennyson, and Milton. They would transfer to the schoolroom the desultory and rapid reading, which may sometimes be, as they say, a helpful or pleasurable habit of mature life. They denounce all endeavors to make the teaching of English a partial equivalent of the old discipline in attentive reading and exact interpretation, associated with the ancient classics. They fear, as they naïvely avow, that accuracy will atrophy. Long before them Plato said that it would dry up the inspiration of pseudo-science.

Lastly, though this is not the time or place to rewrite the apology for classical studies, I may remind you that no notable renascence of European literature and culture hitherto has neglected this discipline and inspiration. As Lowell said, we know not where other studies will lead us, especially if dissociated from this. It is only the tactics of disingenuous debate that will represent such a reminder as a demand for the reinstatement of required Greek or an illiberal identification of classical scholarship with culture. Nothing is indispensable to the success or culture of the individual except what Emerson calls "more or less of power supplied from the eternal." It may well be, as he himself modestly argues, that Mr. H. G. Wells, who knows but little Latin, expresses himself with more vivacity and point than Mr. Livingstone, the professed advocate of classical educa-

tion. No rational classicist supposes that his erudition will make a light writer out of a heavy man. But Mr. Wells, Kipling, and nearly all the English authors whom American controversy cites as arguments for the total banishment of Latin from education did know a little Latin; and Mr. Wells himself censures the excessive zeal of the modernist school that in the fanaticism of its modernity excludes even the amount of Latin that is needed for the complete mastery of English. And for a people that speaks a language whose higher intellectual vocabulary is mainly of Latin origin, the preservation of even a little Latin in the schools may make the difference between literacy and illiteracy. Never to have come in contact with Latin, never to have forgotten it, to have had no experience in Latin sentence structure, no acquaintance with Latin vocables, is not merely to miss the exercise of all the faculties of expression, the discipline and culture, the initiation into the continuity of the European tradition that come with the construing of Cæsar, Cicero, Virgil, and Horace. It is to be incapable of consulting a larger English lexicon with intelligence. It is to be deprived of all immunizing defense against the confusions and the malapropisms into which a Latinless population trying to speak English will inevitably fall.

As Richard Grant White said long ago "the blunders of the Mrs. Quicklys, the Mrs. Malaprops, the Mrs. Partingtons, and their kind, will be found to be almost wholly in the Latin part of the tongue." We have all met them. Here are a few which I have recently observed: fortuitous for fortunate, exordium for exhortation, verbiage for diction, fecundity for facundity, deprecate for depreciate, implicated for implied, elemental for elementary, prevalent for prevailing, obloquy for obliquity, paramount for tantamount, conductive for conducive, and such malapropisms as: deduct an unfavorable prognosis, prospectively very much in arrears, hardly expect the new Mercury to be the prototype of the old, the tenure of his message, sinecure of all eyes, fortify the canal zone as impregnantly as Gibraltar, his book does

not rehabilitate its facts in a form which appeals, an alluminating statement, shares full paid and non-accessible, habits ingratiated in childhood's day, succored on the food of the fathers, bread made of all sorts of combustibles, my bona fides are established, a centotaph to his enterprise, the twin metropoli of the north, and his lacrymose glands. Is it necessary to add that, though the individual who has studied Latin may sometimes lapse into these and similar blunders, a people in whose education Latin retains a reasonable place would be much less likely to sow them broadcast in its speech and will possess more editors and proof-readers who are capable of correcting them. But the divorce of language and thought is an unreal and arbitrary abstraction. And a little study of Latin and translation of Cicero and Virgil will not only tend to protect the student's English against entire abandonment to the loose-lipped lingo of the street and help to raise it out of the inarticulate helplessness of immigrants who have forgotten one language without learning another. It will initiate him, as no modern language and no other studies can, into the central tradition of English literature, tastes, institutions, and ideals which, despite the insistence of the spokesmen of the recent eastern European immigration that they are the only genuine Americans, is destined to remain the central tradition of the America that is to be.

WHAT THE AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLAR GETS FROM OXFORD *

FRANK AYDELOTTE

(The establishment of scholarships which permit students of one country to study in the universities of another is one of the hopeful signs of a growing friendliness among nations. Such an exchange is not only beneficial to higher education but should become increasingly potent as a factor in the maintenance of peace.

President Aydelotte's paper is an admirable summary of what English university life contains of value for Americans. The student should gain from the account an added sense of the possibilities of college life in contributing to the growth of individual strength. He will have pointed out to him anew the cultural influence of respect for fine, old traditions, and the enrichment of a broadened social contact. He will be interested to learn what sport means to an Oxford man. Moreover, he will gain a renewal of respect and tolerance for variation in individual living and thinking, whether of race, of creed, or of personality.

The author was formerly a Rhodes Scholar, and is now American Secretary to the Rhodes Trustees. After having held various professorial positions in American universities, he is now president of Swarthmore College.)

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WHAT THE AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLAR GETS FROM OXFORD

In a sense there are many answers to this question, which the editor of *Scribner's* has put to me, as there are Rhodes Scholars who have gone to Oxford. If in the heat of journalistic effort I am led to ignore individuals and to speak of "the Rhodes Scholar," as if they were all alike, equally happy in their capacities and in their experiences, I hope the reader will not forget, as I do not, that what men get out of Oxford is like what they get from most other opportunities, pretty directly proportioned to what they put in—that the eye sees what it has brought with it the power of seeing, and that students learn mostly only the answers to questions which they already have in their minds. More than of most universities is this true of Oxford. Here, it may be truly said, is God's plenty in the way of educational opportunity; but here also the student is left in the utmost degree of freedom to take or to leave, according to his choice. Good things are not forced upon him. He must have the will to take, he must know what he wants, and he must have the good manners not to grab.

I

The most obvious thing which the Rhodes Scholar gets from Oxford is a degree, and such is the objectiveness of Oxford's academic requirements and such the sincerity of her standards that it is a degree to which a definite meaning can be attached. No restriction is placed upon the Rhodes Scholar's course of study. He may read for any degree, from B.A. to Ph.D., in the same wide range of subjects, from Classics to Agriculture, which would be offered by an American State university. The ordinary

degree is the B.A., and the Rhodes Scholar, if he enters for it, is expected to take the degree with honors. The Oxford Honors B.A. stands for a somewhat more specialized training than does our American Bachelor's degree. The course is pursued in a liberal spirit; but instead of attempting, as we do in the United States, to insure liberality by insisting upon a wide range of subjects, Oxford trusts to the breadth with which a single subject is treated. General knowledge of things outside his specialty, which the American student gets by taking a large number of miscellaneous courses, the Oxford student gets by general reading—a much more economical way.

The requirements for any Oxford degree look on paper rather less extensive and ambitious than do those for the same degree in an American university. What the English academic discipline lacks in extent as compared with ours is made up in thoroughness. The requirements mean all, or more than all, they say. The method of examination is such as to make cramming of little avail, and a man must depend for his showing on what he really knows. The difference between English and American standards for undergraduate work may be understood by looking for a moment at the type of men who get the highest academic distinctions in the two countries. In the United States these distinctions may be won by a man of first-class ability, provided he is moderately faithful to his work throughout his four years; or they may be won by a man of average ability who works early and late, makes every minute count, and fulfils every requirement to the letter. It may be questioned whether we have in the United States any academic honors the standard for which is so high as to demand the latter type of work from the former type of man. The English idea of first-class honors is precisely this: that they should be obtainable only by a man of first-class ability who has done the hardest and best work of which he was capable.

The American student at Oxford misses almost all the academic machinery that he has been used to in his native university. At Oxford there are no "courses" in the American sense of the term.

There are no record cards in the Registrar's office, no "signing up" for the lectures he expects to attend, no required number of hours per week, no daily assignments, no mid-term tests or hour exams. The Rhodes Scholar is a little puzzled on his first Monday morning, and on a great many mornings thereafter, to know just what he is expected to do at a given hour and moment. Shall he read this volume, or master such and such a table of dates, or attend such and such a lecture, or perchance wander down High Street in search of tobacco, or shall he spend a few hours in the shop of one of the delightful Oxford booksellers adding to the riches of his shelves in exchange for the inferior riches of his purse? The world of work and of play, and of a thousand delightful pursuits which lie midway between the two, is all before him where to choose. His only hard-and-fast academic engagement is to call on his tutor once a week at a specified hour to read an essay which he has written on a specified topic. There is a list of lectures which he may, or may not, find it to his interest to attend. To his surprise he will find his tutor frankly dubious about the value of following too many lectures, a doubt which the lecturer himself is likely to share. More than once have I heard Sir Walter Raleigh begin the term by explaining that his auditors would probably find his discourses of little value for "Schools." The lecturer keeps no roll of the members of his class, and it is the common practice of undergraduates to sample various courses at the beginning of the term and to continue only in those which seem to them worth while. This is the practice which one's tutor usually recommends. The result is that lecture courses at Oxford begin commonly with good-sized audiences which taper off to a small and faithful few by the end of the term.

The academic system at Oxford, if one may call it such, is wonderfully simple. The method is to prescribe not what the undergraduate is supposed to "take," but what he is supposed to know, to allow him a certain length of time in which to acquire that knowledge, and then to examine him in order to see whether

or not he has acquired it. Even the word "acquire" is a little false to what Oxford expects of a man. Her theory of liberal knowledge is rather the development of power of thought, of grasp of a certain limited field of knowledge, than the acquisition of a store of facts, though the latter is, of course, necessary to the former. Whereas the American undergraduates takes courses, the Oxford man studies a subject.

There is nothing new in this theory, nothing that would not be professed in any American university. What is new to the American Rhodes Scholar is the simplicity and directness with which it is acted upon. It is so easy for the elaborate and cumbersome machinery of the elective system to hinder the very educational process it is designed to further. It is so easy for the quantitative method of counting up hours in a registrar's office to get itself translated into a quantitative theory of culture. When the faculty of a university refuses to commit itself as to the necessary ingredients of a liberal education, when the elective system seems to be based upon some kind of democracy of courses in which one "hour" is equal to another no matter how many light-years of intellectual distance may separate their origins, it is easy for the student who is supposed to make the higher synthesis, supposed to fuse these diverse subjects into a unified body of knowledge and into a unified point of view toward life, to escape altogether the notion that any such synthesis is necessary or possible, and to come to think of education in purely quantitative terms. A man cannot do this at Oxford. The very lack of system brings him face to face with the reality of education.

The tutorial method of instruction is a natural outgrowth of the form of Oxford's academic requirements, and hence it is that American attempts to graft the tutorial method onto our ordinary system of instruction by courses have failed to produce the same results as come from the English system. The heart of that is the conceiving of undergraduate work in terms of what a man should know, instead of conceiving it in terms of the

processes by which that knowledge is to be acquired. At Oxford a man's work is outlined (in the book which corresponds most nearly to the catalog of an American university, namely, the *Examination Statutes*) entirely in terms of the examinations which he must pass for his degree. He prepares himself for these examinations by his own efforts under the direction of his tutor. The tutor acts as guide, philosopher, and friend; he will help his charge by every kind of advice and criticism to make the most of his own abilities and of the instructional facilities provided by the university and the colleges; but he considers it no part of his duty to do the undergraduate's work for him. Success depends, more than anything else, on a man's own industry and initiative. It is fatally easy to waste a great deal of precious time getting down to work. On the other hand, a man who is able to plan for himself, and who has the energy and the initiative to work without constant supervision, can go as far and as fast as he likes. Perhaps capacity for independent work is the most important academic result of the Oxford system of education.

The American Rhodes Scholar gets from Oxford not merely a new attitude toward his work, but also a new respect for examinations. In the United States examinations are not, as a rule, viewed with much favor; and it is the fashion at present to consider them as a very untrustworthy means of measuring intellectual ability. There are not wanting those persons in England who believe that in their own country too much attention is paid to examinations and too great weight attached to their results. However this may be, the English have developed the fine art of examining to a very high degree of accuracy. This is proved by the fact that the results of the examinations at Oxford and Cambridge offer a good basis for prediction of success in after-life; there is not in the United States the discrepancy between success in college studies and success in after-life which our humorous writers would sometimes lead us to believe; but the correspondence is not so marked, especially in political life,

in this country as it is in England. Oxford examinations are more severe but less pedantic than ours. It is a principle in England that a man shall not be examined by those persons who have the responsibility of teaching him. English examinations come at the end of a year or of two years of work rather than term by term, or week by week. They are usually of the essay type, and their attempt is to discover power of dealing with the subject rather than merely to test the memory for specific details. In the ordinary Honor School a man will have from seven to twelve three-hour papers following each other at the rate of two a day for the better part of a week. Cramming for such a series of tests is impossible. The advice usually given by one's tutor is to get away from Oxford, forget about books, and play tennis or golf for a few days before the examinations begin. In the examination-room a student confronted by a paper of ten or twelve questions will spend the first two hours on the two questions which he knows most about, answering each as exhaustively and thoughtfully as possible. In his third hour he will answer two or three more briefly but as well as he can.

In the English system a man is marked qualitatively on the basis of what he writes rather than quantitatively on the basis of what he leaves out. After the papers are all read he appears before his examiners for an oral, in which they have ample opportunity to test him on any topics which he did not mention in his answers. His effort must be to show at some points in his papers first-class work, which means in England answers which not merely contain information but are also well thought out and well written.

It is easy to see from what has been said that one of the most important things which a Rhodes Scholar gets from Oxford is a powerful impulse to re-examine all his conceptions of educational theory and practice. He goes to an institution where many things which are taken for granted in the United States are not taken for granted, or perhaps not believed in at all. He finds in England many things taken for granted which he, perhaps, had

always thought dangerous or untrue. He may come back to America with his intellectual creed unchanged, but he can hardly come back without having thought through for himself the whole foundation of his educational beliefs, a process of the highest value whatever may be the result.

II

But life at Oxford is not all work. Indeed, the hardest part of an Oxford man's work is done in the vacations, and term-time (which altogether is a little less than twenty-six weeks in the year) is very largely given to living the Oxford life. From this life the American Rhodes Scholar gets a great deal that he could never get from books. For him, even more than for Englishmen, it is well worth while. In the first place, it is a very beautiful life, though the surface of it is, like the face of a glacier, overstrewn with a miscellaneous drift of academic stupidity and youthful folly which, at the first glance, more or less conceal the beauty that lies beneath. But at its heart Oxford life is worthy of its setting and worthy of the great words with which Matthew Arnold has praised its beauty and sweetness. It is not strange, but only seems so, that this beauty should come home to the undergraduate but slowly. One of the finest things which the American Rhodes Scholar will get from his Oxford experience he is likely not to get in the three years of his scholarship. Only in after years, on one of those visits which Americans show such a decided tendency to make back to the home of their English foster-mother, will he be able to see in true perspective the significance of these eager undergraduate days—days of intense effort, of struggle with great tasks, of listening to half-heeded words of great teachers, of light-hearted, high-spirited converse with men too many of the best of whom will visit Oxford quadrangles no more. Then some night as he walks back to his lodgings after dinner at High Table—that stateliest of all the rites of academic hospitality—

the moonlight on sleeping walls and towers will thrill him with the sense of the tangled, interwoven beauty of this life that once was his.

If I were to single out from all the beauty and intensity and good-fellowship of this life the two things which are likely to mean most to the American, I should say they are talk and sport. Perhaps these are two things which occupy most of the waking hours of the average English undergraduate. If he spends four or five hours a day at his books and lectures, he is considered reasonably industrious, and may with good conscience spend ten or twelve on social affairs with his fellows, in numberless breakfasts, lunches, teas, coffees, and club meetings, or in keen athletic competition with them on the river or the courts or the broad playing fields with which the university and the colleges are so generously supplied.

My purpose is not to describe all this Oxford social life, but to say, or to suggest, if I can, what the American Rhodes Scholar gets from it. I am afraid I can only suggest, for human values of this kind are too complex and too rich for the abstract formulæ of educational discussion. The undergraduate learns from his fellows innumerable lessons in getting on with other people. He learns, or has the chance to learn, how to use his ideas in action rather than merely how to hold them suspended in his mind. Most Rhodes Scholars would say that Oxford talk is the best talk in the world. I do not believe that this is due so much to any peculiar virtue of the men who compose the university as to the fact that the life is so arranged as to provide the leisure and the stimulus for it. As to its educational value, most Rhodes Scholars would say that the testimony of such diverse characters as Cardinal Newman and Robert Louis Stevenson, which sounds rather extravagant to American ears, was no whit too strong. In the almost unique intimacy and good-fellowship of Oxford life, where for the moment men from every nation and every class are living together and surveying the nations of the earth in human and humorous companionship, the Rhodes Scholar, if he

has in him the capacity for wisdom, learns the difference between an abstract formula and a living point of view. It is the seven years of plenty with him, a time when it is bliss to be alive and very heaven to be young. But he feeds intellectually on a rich diet which not every man can digest. The Rhodes Scholar will need all his characteristically scanty store of general information and more than all of the scanty American tolerance of ideas not current in the United States. If he have the capacity for assimilation, if he can become a part of what he meets, he may return from Oxford to the United States a citizen of the world.

Rhodes Scholars are usually athletes, but they have much to learn from Oxford sports, and they take eager pleasure in learning it. The difference between sport at Oxford and sport in the United States is almost the difference between work and play. In the United States athletics are managed by members of the faculty who have the rare gifts needed for such important work. Teams are coached and trained by experts. The costumes and implements are designed by other experts, all to the end of producing the maximum skill and efficiency of which the human frame and the human mind are capable. The result is greater public interest in athletic contests and probably a higher degree of athletic skill than is the rule in England, though this is difficult to measure, since neither country plays exactly the games which attract the greatest interest in the other.

At Oxford athletics are entirely in the hands of the undergraduates. There are no paid coaches; and if in a given college at a given moment no old player is available to coach the team or the boat, it is not uncommon to apply to the captain of a rival team for some useful suggestions and criticisms, which are sure to be given with the utmost candor and liberality. The management of athletics at Oxford is distinctly amateurish and could undoubtedly be improved in efficiency by American methods. Training is earnest but not scientific. The choosing of the members of crews and teams is left to the captain and such

advisers as he may select. There are so many forms of athletics and participation is so nearly universal that there are almost no spectators at college matches, and fewer than in the United States at the major inter-university contests.

This sport for sport's sake at Oxford is one of the finest experiences among the many fine opportunities opened by a Rhodes Scholarship. Freed from the curse of spectators there is no finer moral and social training in the world than sport. Without the spectators' compulsion to win, which makes football such a nerve-racking occupation in the United States, no longer exists. Under the conditions obtaining at Oxford and Cambridge the idea that it would be a thousand times better to lose a game than to commit the slightest unfair action does not need to be argued. It is taken for granted just as it is taken for granted in every sport in the United States which has not become a spectacle for the crowd. The absence of spectators takes nothing from the keenness of the contest, but it makes that keenness a healthy, normal, human desire to win or to do one's best, rather than a frenzied feeling that the only two courses before the player are victory or suicide. The absence of spectators implies that the Oxford athlete must buy his own togs and pay his own expenses, which men do cheerfully. Playing fields are, of course, owned by the college, and the barge on the river and the expensive shells in which the crews row are paid for by the college boat-club. For the rest men buy their own equipment, and it is no uncommon thing for the members of a team of an Oxford college going to play a college in Cambridge to be assessed so much per head to pay the traveling expenses. All this simplification of sport gives a better opportunity for the emergence of its true moral and social values. These values exist just as truly in American college sports, and it is no small credit to the inherent sportsmanship of American players and coaches that they do persist, in the face of the terrific and often unscrupulous pressure of spectators and supporters who are interested not in the true values of sport but only in victory.

III

The Rhodes Scholar spends one-half of his year at Oxford; he has a six weeks' holiday at Christmas, another five or six weeks at Easter-time, and four months in the summer. It is perhaps fair to say that something like half of what he gets from his experience comes from these vacations, when he has the opportunity to travel in England and on the Continent, and to study European life and languages. Not that the vacations are all play. Under the Oxford system term-time is the season for mapping out work, covering the ground hastily, getting together books, and listening to lectures; the hard grinding, filling in the chinks and reading round the subject in the way necessary for a creditable showing in the honor examinations must all be done in the vacation. Every vacation a man must make a careful balance between the demands of his Oxford work and the interest of foreign lands. The typical Rhodes Scholar way of doing this is to avoid too much travel, to settle in some English or Continental town, spend five or six hours a day on Oxford studies, and the rest of the day in seeing the sights and in learning the manners, and perhaps the language, of the people. The three years of a Rhodes Scholarship wisely spent will give a man a command of at least one European language, and perhaps a working knowledge of one or two more, together with that kind of understanding of English and Continental life which comes from living with the people, and which does not come from merely traveling through the countries.

Some men confine their vacations to England and the near-by countries of the Continent; some journey farther afield into Russia, the Balkan States, the Near East, and the Holy Land; an occasional Rhodes Scholar finishes off his Oxford career by returning home around the world. Since 1914 Rhodes Scholars have added to their knowledge of European peoples and to the credit of their own country by giving generous service to various movements for European relief during and after the war. Their

record in Belgium with Hoover is well known. Not so well known is the fact that they were to be found, before the United States entered the war, with the British and French armies as ambulance-drivers and Y. M. C. A. secretaries—on the European fighting fronts, in Palestine, in India, and even in East Africa. Since the war they have gone almost everywhere with the far-flung line of American and English relief.

The result of these vacations, whether in war-time or in peace, is that the Rhodes Scholar comes back with some idea not merely of the English way of looking at life, but also of that of two or three European nations. He is an internationalist of a human rather than merely theoretical sort. This can hardly be said to simplify international problems for him. Perhaps it tends instead to give him an idea of their complexity.

If I may speak for myself and for the men whom I know well, I should say that the Rhodes Scholars have drawn from this experience the conclusion that the United States should play a larger and a more generous part in European affairs, that we should look at such problems as our tariff, the question of the participation in the League of Nations, and the question of the collection of war debts from a point of view wider than that of an American country town. No bafflement at the complexity of European national interests, no amount of distrust of the traditional methods of European diplomacy, no criticisms, however valid, of European social systems which, however different, seem, from an American point of view, to resemble each other in the difficulties which they place in the way of the able man of humble origin—none of these can make it any less true that we are one among the family of nations in a very small world rapidly growing smaller. The fact that we do not as a nation understand very much of what has gone on in Europe since the war and do not approve very highly of what we do understand—these facts should not, in the opinion of at least one Rhodes Scholar, prevent America, which has less war fatigue, less danger,

and greater strength, from taking a wise and generous part in international affairs.

One of the most important things which a Rhodes Scholar gets from his Oxford experience is a changed attitude toward his own country. A Rhodes Scholar always returns to the United States a better American than he was when he went over. The fears which were widely expressed when the Rhodes will was made public, that three years at Oxford would make British subjects, or at any rate Anglomaniacs out of our American boys, have proved to be without foundation. Out of about six hundred Rhodes Scholars who have been elected since the scheme started in 1904 only one has become a British subject, and the others cannot be told from American college graduates, who have not enjoyed that experience, by any tendency to use the English accent or a monocle. Practically all the Rhodes Scholars have returned to the United States to live. A few have gone abroad as members of the diplomatic corps of the United States, or as representatives of American newspapers or business firms. The largest single group living abroad are those who have become American missionaries in China, and perhaps no Rhodes Scholars are better placed to serve their country than are these.

The Rhodes Scholar comes back a better American than he was when he went over, but he comes back less of a jingo. The jingo, like every other blusterer, is a man who is at heart not sure of his own cause. The attitude of the United States toward England has been for a century one of sensitiveness to criticism, of resentment of fancied slights on our own manners and culture, of a disposition to undervalue those intellectual and artistic achievements in which Europe has excelled us, and to overvalue those political and material goods in which we have excelled Europe. The American has often carried a chip on his shoulder because he was secretly conscious in some points of his own inferiority. The American Rhodes Scholar sees that he need take that attitude no longer. The energy and idealism of the

people of the United States, and the good fortune of her position, have brought America to a place where she need no longer envy other nations their points of excellence, where her cue should be to thank God for her own blessings, to admire frankly and to study carefully the best of other countries in order, if possible, to add all good things to her own heritage.

The Rhodes Scholar sees this. He learns at Oxford and in England and on the Continent that his country, if not always in all things admired, is nevertheless never held in contempt by those whose opinions matter, but always respected, and, indeed, often admired beyond its deserts. He learns this best perhaps in Oxford, where young men from all nations live together in good-fellowship and discuss international problems with humanity and humor. The effect upon the American Rhodes Scholar is to teach him to hold up his head as the Cook's tourist does not. He finds that the angry flush no longer mounts to his cheek at an English criticism of the internal arrangements of a Pullman sleeping-car. His heart does not always fill with unalloyed national pride at an English sporting under-graduate's admiration of the fact that sixty thousand people spend a quarter of a million dollars to see a Harvard-Yale game.

The American Rhodes Scholar learns to respect his country as the jingo never does. He learns to be jealous of her action in those things that matter. Living in a country where, because of the extent of that League of Nations called the British Empire, international problems are discussed more constantly and more intelligently than anywhere else on earth, he learns, or begins to learn, the lesson of the interdependence of nations; he learns to realize the necessity of understanding and serving the interests of others in order best to serve our own.

In the mere matter of foreign commerce the American Rhodes Scholar sees how interwoven are our interests with the prosperity of the whole world, a fact not generally realized by that great body of our citizens who are dependent on that commerce for bread, or at any rate for luxuries. And he comes back with the

longing to have his country, which responds so quickly and so generously to the call of the plague-stricken and the starving, respond also to that less piercing but more important call of the best men of all nations for the help of the strongest in meeting the problems of the day, which, however met, threaten to tax the strength of civilization. And he would translate that call into action in our tariff legislation, in our attitude toward the League of Nations and toward the repayment of the Allied debts.

The Rhodes Scholar gets out of his Oxford experience an international point of view. He also gets from it a new conception of the kinship of the English-speaking nations of the world. One of the great surprises in store for him is the similarity which he finds between his own point of view and that of the Rhodes Scholars from the British Dominions—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. And as he returns time after time from the Continent, he wakes up with surprise to find that the differences which he noted at first, not always with approval, between English ways and his own are, as he learns to look beneath the surface, less significant, and that when he lands at Dover he begins to feel at home. Not that he learns to admire everything English. The typical Rhodes Scholar soon learns to talk and think less and less about "the English" as such. He thinks with Englishmen of like ideas, believing in one party and distrusting the others, feeling at home in one social group and disapproving of the ways of others, just as he would at home. He will not approve of all Englishmen, but he learns to argue with all of them, which is the important thing. Finally, he wakes up to the discovery, rarely made on this side of the Atlantic, that our civilization is English at bottom, and that common speech and common law are only significant of a common way of looking at life—a common belief in freedom, in individual effort, and in sportsmanship, which are the real heritage of the Anglo-Saxon race. And he comes to see, as Rhodes saw, that this code of life which preserves the peace among single men of wide individual

differences, which stimulates individual initiative and yet makes possible common action, which places justice and integrity above cleverness, which loves institutions and distrusts logic, which (usually) makes reforms slowly, anxious always to unite the best of the old with the best of the new, trying to repair the building of the state rather than to tear it down and rebuild it again—that this point of view distinguishes the whole English-speaking race from the French of 1789, the Germans of 1914, and the Russians of 1920. He is likely to come furthermore to the belief that this point of view, if it could be applied to international problems as it has been so successfully to disputes between man and man, would work out slowly but surely the riddle of these perplexing times. Perhaps this is the truest and most valuable of all the ideas which the American Rhodes Scholar gets from Oxford.

LITERARY TASTE*

ARNOLD BENNETT

(A taste for good literature is a blessed possession. But can all the thousands of readers of books hot from the press be said to possess a taste for good literature, or even for literature? Obviously they do not all have what Arnold Bennett means by literary taste. Some read to satisfy their vanity. To them familiarity with literature is an accomplishment by which they can shine among their friends and in society. If we are to believe the advertisements the number of such readers is large. Others, and a far greater number, read for distraction. They wish to amuse themselves, to pass time that would otherwise hang heavy upon them. The reader who seeks only for distraction need not worry about improving his taste. He will always find things written to please him. But even for such a reader a developed taste will mean much. It will broaden and deepen the range of his appreciation, add zest by variety, and relieve him of the monotony of repetition and the resultant boredom, of which there is much in the lower levels of the literature of distraction.

To regard literature merely as something to take up as an accomplishment or to seek as a distraction is to debase it. The makers of literature, according to Mr. Bennett, do what the poets do. They make the commonplace seem miraculous. "Their lives are one long ecstasy of denying that the world is a dull place." His own fiction, written about an industrial district in North Staffordshire, deals with people whose lives are outwardly uneventful and commonplace. Take *Clayhanger* or the *Old Wives' Tale,* for example. Stodgy old women, years of routine, sickness,

*From *Literary Taste; How to Form It.* Doran, 1909.

disappointment, frustration, recurrent details of business, and jangling quarrels; such things do not seem to afford much glamour. But "the spirit of literature is unifying; it joins the candle and the star, and by the magic of an image shows that the beauty of the greater is in the less." That is Mr. Bennett's own particular distinction. He finds the universal in the commonplace. The joys and sorrows of his simple characters are the joys and sorrows of humanity. In the candle he finds the beauty of the star.)

LITERARY TASTE

MANY people, if not most, look on literary taste as an elegant accomplishment, by acquiring which they will complete themselves, and make themselves finally fit as members of a correct society. They are secretly ashamed of their ignorance of literature, in the same way as they would be ashamed of their ignorance of etiquette at a high entertainment, or of their inability to ride a horse if suddenly called upon to do so. There are certain things that a man ought to know, or to know about, and literature is one of them: such is their idea. They have learnt to dress themselves with propriety, and to behave with propriety on all occasions; they are fairly "up" in the questions of the day; by industry and enterprise they are succeeding in their vocations; it behooves them, then, not to forget that an acquaintance with literature is an indispensable part of a self-respecting man's personal baggage. Painting doesn't matter; music doesn't matter very much. But "every one is supposed to know" about literature. Then, literature is such a charming distraction! Literary taste thus serves two purposes: as a certificate of correct culture and as a private pastime. A young professor of mathematics, immense at mathematics and games, dangerous at chess, capable of Haydn on the violin, once said to me, after listening to some chat on books, "Yes, I must take up literature." As though saying: "I was rather forgetting literature. However, I've polished off all these other things. I'll have a shy at literature now."

This attitude, or any attitude which resembles it, is wrong. To him who really comprehends what literature is, and what the function of literature is, this attitude is simply ludicrous. It is also fatal to the formation of literary taste. People who regard

literary taste simply as an accomplishment, and literature simply as a distraction, will never truly succeed either in acquiring the accomplishment or in using it half-acquired as a distraction; though the one is the most perfect of distractions, and though the other is unsurpassed by any other accomplishment in elegance or in power to impress the universal snobbery of civilized mankind. Literature, instead of being an accessory, is the fundamental *sine qua non* of complete living. I am extremely anxious to avoid rhetorical exaggerations. I do not think that I am guilty of one in asserting that he who has not been "presented to the freedom" of literature has not wakened up out of his prenatal sleep. He is merely not born. He can't see; he can't hear; he can't feel, in any full sense. He can only eat his dinner. What more than anything else annoys people who know the true function of literature, and have profited thereby, is the spectacle of so many thousands of individuals going about under the delusion that they are alive, when as a fact, they are no nearer being alive than a bear in winter.

I will tell you what literature is! No—I only wish I could. But I can't. No one can. Gleams can be thrown on the secret, inklings given, but no more. I will try to give you an inkling. And, to do so, I will take you back into your own history, or forward into it. That evening when you went for a walk with your faithful friend, the friend from whom you hid nothing—or almost nothing . . . ! You were, in truth, somewhat inclined to hide from him the particular matter which monopolized your mind that evening, but somehow you contrived to get on to it, drawn by an overpowering fascination. And as your faithful friend was sympathetic and discreet, and flattered you by a respectful curiosity, you proceeded further and further into the said matter, growing more and more confidential, until at last, you cried out, in a terrific whisper: "My boy, she is simply miraculous!" In that you were in the domain of literature.

Let me explain. Of course, in the ordinary acceptation of the

word, she was not miraculous. Your faithful friend had never noticed that she was miraculous, nor had about forty thousand other fairly keen observers. She was just a girl. Troy had not been burnt for her. A girl cannot be called a miracle. If a girl is to be called a miracle, then you might call pretty nearly anything a miracle. . . . That is just it: you might. You can. You ought. Amid all the miracles of the universe you had just wakened up to one. You were full of your discovery. You were under a divine impulsion to impart that discovery. You had a strong sense of the marvelous beauty of something, and you had to share it. You were in a passion about something, and you had to vent yourself on somebody. You were drawn toward the whole of the rest of the human race. Mark the effect of your mood and utterance on your faithful friend. He knew that she was not a miracle. No other person could have made him believe that she was a miracle. But you, by the force and sincerity of your own vision of her, and by the fervor of your desire to make him participate in your vision, did for quite a long time cause him to feel that he had been blind to the miracle of that girl.

You were producing literature. You were alive. Your eyes were unlidded, your ears were unstopped, to some part of the beauty and the strangeness of the world; and a strong instinct within you forced you to tell some one. It was not enough for you that you saw and heard. Others had to see and hear. Others had to be wakened up. And they were! It is quite possible—I am not quite sure—that your faithful friend the very next day, or the next month, looked at some other girl, and suddenly saw that she, too, was miraculous! The influence of literature!

The makers of literature are those who have seen and felt the miraculous interestingness of the universe. And the greatest makers of literature are those whose vision has been the widest, and whose feeling has been the most intense. Your own frag-

ment of insight was accidental, and perhaps temporary. *Their* lives are one long ecstasy of denying that the world is a dull place. Is it nothing to you to learn to understand that the world is not a dull place? Is it nothing to you to be led out of the tunnel on to the hillside, to have all your senses quickened, to be invigorated by the true savor of life, to feel your heart beating under that correct necktie of yours? These makers of literature render you their equals.

The aim of literary study is not to amuse the hours of leisure; it is to awake oneself, it is to be alive, to intensify one's capacity for pleasure, for sympathy, and for comprehension. It is not to change utterly one's relations with the world. It is not to affect one hour, but twenty-four hours. An understanding appreciation of literature means an understanding appreciation of the world, and it means nothing else. Not isolated and unconnected parts of life, but all of life, brought together and correlated in a synthetic map! The spirit of literature is unifying; it joins the candle and the star, and by the magic of an image shows that the beauty of the greater is in the less. And, not content with the disclosure of beauty and the bringing together of all things whatever within its focus, it enforces a moral wisdom by the tracing everywhere of cause and effect. It consoles doubly—by the revelation of unsuspected loveliness, and by the proof that our lot is the common lot. It is the supreme cry of the discoverer, offering sympathy and asking for it in a single gesture. In attending a University Extension Lecture on the sources of Shakespeare's plots, or in studying the researches of George Saintsbury into the origins of English prosody, or in weighing the evidence for and against the assertion that Rousseau was a scoundrel, one is apt to forget what literature really is and is for. It is well to remind ourselves that literature is first and last a means of life, and that the enterprise of forming one's literary taste is an enterprise of learning how best to use this means of life. People who don't want to live, people who would sooner hibernate

than feel intensely, will be wise to eschew literature. They had better, to quote from the finest passage in a fine poem, "sit around and eat blackberries." The sight of a "common bush afire with God" might upset their nerves.

DICKENS *

GEORGE SANTAYANA

(There are those to-day who assume an attitude of superiority towards Dickens. They tell us that he was a sentimentalist, and often wet with his tears the paper he was writing upon. His women, they say, are idealized out of all resemblance to the character of earthly females, until, if they are young, they are little better than angels in temporary exile upon the earth. And his men, besides hailing from the vulgar classes, if possessed of a favorite epithet, are incapable of uttering a sentence without it; if dowered with an ugly nose, seem to have no other feature worth mentioning.

It has remained for a philosopher to set us right. George Santayana, a native of Spain, was a colleague of William James and Josiah Royce in the department of philosophy at Harvard. A younger man, he has survived them, though he has long since left Cambridge and gone to England to live. His *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900) and his *Life of Reason* in five volumes (1905-06) are sufficiently intensive studies of the nature and place of beauty in human life to make us respect his judgment. His recent *Character and Opinion in the United States* (1920) and his *Soliloquies in England* (1922) are the fruit of a dispassionate, a close and original, observation of the national society in both countries. So his declaration of allegiance to Dickens, if the charm of its easy style does not win us, will perhaps overcome our prejudices by the weight of authority.

Santayana finds Dickens essentially human. He admits his deficiencies. Dickens' situations may be melodramatic, his notion of Christianity absurdly Victorian, his conception of high so-

* From *Soliloquies in England*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922.

ciety purely imaginary. But all these matters, in regard to which our realists would have us be so careful, says Santayana, are superficial. They may change or pass away. The qualities in which Dickens excels are permanent. Whatever happens to the structure of our society or to our ideas about it, the noblest and the truest traits in human character will persist, and they are what Dickens abundantly gives us. As Henry James says of Goldsmith, it is not that we find his novels well constructed, but that the qualities of his personality reflected in them afford a perennial satisfaction.)

DICKENS

If Christendom should lose everything that is now in the melting-pot, human life would still remain amiable and quite adequately human. I draw this comforting assurance from the pages of Dickens. Who could not be happy in his world? Yet there is nothing essential to it which the most destructive revolution would be able to destroy. People would still be as different, as absurd, and as charming as are his characters; the springs of kindness and folly in their lives would not be dried up. Indeed, there is much in Dickens which communism, if it came, would only emphasize and render universal. Those schools, those poorhouses, those prisons, with those surviving shreds of family life in them, show us what in the coming age (with some sanitary improvements) would be the nursery and home of everybody. Everybody would be a waif, like Oliver Twist, like Smike, like Pip, and like David Copperfield; and amongst the agents and underlings of social government, to whom all these waifs would be entrusted, there would surely be a goodly sprinkling of Pecksniffs, Squeers's, and Fangs; whilst the Fagins would be everywhere commissioners of the people. Nor would there fail to be, in high places and in low, the occasional sparkle of some Pickwick or Cheeryble Brothers or Sam Weller or Mark Tapley; and the voluble Flora Finchings would be everywhere in evidence, and the strong-minded Betsey Trotwoods in office. There would also be, among the inefficient, many a Dora and Agnes and Little Emily—with her charm but without her tragedy, since this is one of the things which the promised social reform would happily render impossible; I mean, by removing all the disgrace of it. The only element in the world of Dickens which would become obsolete would be the setting, the atmosphere

of material instrumentalities and arrangements, as traveling by coach is obsolete; but traveling by rail, by motor, or by airship will emotionally be much the same thing. It is worth noting how such instrumentalities, which absorb modern life, are admired and enjoyed by Dickens, as they were by Homer. The poets ought not to be afraid of them; they exercise the mind congenially, and can be played with joyfully. Consider the black ships and the chariots of Homer, the coaches and river-boats of Dickens, and the aeroplanes of to-day; to what would an unspoiled young mind turn with more interest? Dickens tells us little of English sports, but he shares the sporting nature of the Englishman, to whom the whole material world is a playing-field, the scene giving ample scope to his love of action, legality, and pleasant achievement. His art is to sport according to the rules of the game, and to do things for the sake of doing them, rather than for any ulterior motive.

It is remarkable, in spite of his ardent simplicity and openness of heart, how insensible Dickens was to the greater themes of the human imagination—religion, science, politics, art. He was a waif himself, and utterly disinherited. For example, the terrible heritage of contentious religions which fills the world seems not to exist for him. In this matter he was like a sensitive child, with a most religious disposition, but no religious ideas. Perhaps, properly speaking, he had no *ideas* on any subject; what he had was a vast sympathetic participation in the daily life of mankind; and what he saw of ancient institutions made him hate them, as needless sources of oppression, misery, selfishness, and rancor. His one political passion was philanthropy, genuine but felt only on its negative, reforming side; of positive utopias or enthusiasms we hear nothing. The political background of Christendom is only, so to speak, an old faded back-drop for his stage; a castle, a frigate, a gallows, and a large female angel with white wings standing above an orphan by an open grave—a decoration which has to serve for all the melodramas in his theater, intellectually so provincial and poor. Common

life as it is lived was varied and lovable enough for Dickens, if only the pests and cruelties could be removed from it. Suffering wounded him, but not vulgarity; whatever pleased his senses and whatever shocked them filled his mind alike with romantic wonder, with the endless delight of observation. Vulgarity—and what can we relish, if we recoil at vulgarity?—was innocent and amusing; in fact, for the humorist, it was the spice of life. There was more piety in being human than in being pious. In reviving Christmas, Dickens transformed it from the celebration of a metaphysical mystery into a feast of overflowing simple kindness and good cheer; the church bells were still there—in the orchestra; and the angels of Bethlehem were still there—painted on the back-curtain. Churches, in his novels, are vague, desolate places where one has ghastly experiences, and where only the pew-opener is human; and such religious and political conflicts as he depicts in *Barnaby Rudge* and in *A Tale of Two Cities* are street brawls and prison scenes and conspiracies in taverns, without any indication of the contrasts in mind or interests between the opposed parties. Nor had Dickens any lively sense for fine art, classical tradition, science, or even the manners and feelings of the upper classes in his own time and country: in his novels we may almost say there is no army, no navy, no church, no sport, no distant travel, no daring adventure, no feeling for the watery wastes and the motley nations of the planet, and—luckily, with his notion of them—no lords and ladies. Even love of the traditional sort is hardly in Dickens's sphere—I mean the soldierly passion in which a rather rakish gallantry was sobered by devotion, and loyalty rested on pride. In Dickens love is sentimental or benevolent or merry or sneaking or canine; in his last book he was going to describe a love that was passionate and criminal; but love for him was never chivalrous, never poetical. What he paints most tragically is a quasipaternal devotion in the old to the young, the love of Mr. Peggotty for Little Emily, or of Solomon Gills for Walter Gay. A series of shabby little

adventures, such as might absorb the interest of an average youth, were romantic enough for Dickens.

I say he was disinherited, but he inherited the most terrible negations. Religion lay on him like the weight of the atmosphere, sixteen pounds to the square inch, yet never noticed nor mentioned. He lived and wrote in the shadow of the most awful prohibitions. Hearts petrified by legality and falsified by worldliness offered, indeed, a good subject for a novelist, and Dickens availed himself of it to the extent of always contrasting natural goodness and happiness with whatever is morose; but his morose people were wicked, not virtuous in their own way; so that the protest of his temperament against his environment never took a radical form nor went back to first principles. He needed to feel, in his writing, that he was carrying the sympathies of every man with him. In him conscience was single, and he could not conceive how it could ever be divided in other men. He denounced scandals without exposing shams, and conformed willingly and scrupulously to the proprieties. Lady Dedlock's secret, for instance, he treats as if it were the sin of Adam, remote, mysterious, inexpiable. Mrs. Dombey is not allowed to deceive her husband except by pretending to deceive him. The seduction of Little Emily is left out altogether, with the whole character of Steerforth, the development of which would have been so important in the moral experience of David Copperfield himself. But it is not public prejudice alone that plays the censor over Dickens's art; his own kindness and even weakness of heart act sometimes as marplots. The character of Miss Mowcher, for example, so brilliantly introduced, was evidently intended to be shady, and to play a very important part in the story; but its original in real life, which was recognized, had to be conciliated, and the sequel was omitted and patched up with an apology—itself admirable—for the poor dwarf. Such a sacrifice does honor to Dickens's heart; but artists should meditate on their works in time, and it is easy to remove any too great likeness in a portrait by a few touches making it more consistent than real

people are apt to be; and in this case, if the little creature had been really guilty, how much more subtle and tragic her apology for herself might have been, like that of the bastard Edmund in *King Lear*! So, too, in *Dombey and Son*, Dickens could not bear to let Walter Gay turn out badly, as he had been meant to do, and to break his uncle's heart as well as the heroine's; he was accordingly transformed into a stage hero miraculously saved from shipwreck, and Florence was not allowed to reward the admirable Toots, as she should have done, with her trembling hand. But Dickens was no free artist; he had more genius than taste, a warm fancy not aided by a thorough understanding of complex characters. He worked under pressure, for money and applause, and often had to cheapen in execution what his inspiration had so vividly conceived.

What, then, is there left, if Dickens has all these limitations? In our romantic disgust we might be tempted to say, Nothing. But in fact almost everything is left, almost everything that counts in the daily life of mankind, or that by its presence or absence can determine whether life shall be worth living or not; because a simple good life is worth living, and an elaborate bad life is not. There remains in the first place eating and drinking; relished not bestially, but humanly, jovially, as the sane and exhilarating basis for everything else. This is a sound English beginning; but the immediate sequel, as the England of that day presented it to Dickens, is no less delightful. There is the ruddy glow of the hearth; the sparkle of glasses and brasses and well-scrubbed pewter; the savory fumes of the hot punch, after the tingle of the wintry air; the coaching-scenes, the motley figures and absurd incidents of travel; the changing sights and joys of the road. And then, to balance this, the traffic of ports and cities, the hubbub of crowded streets, the luxury of shop-windows and of palaces not to be entered; the procession of the passers-by, shabby or ludicrously genteel; the dingy look and musty smell of their lodgings; the labyrinth of back-alleys, courts, and mews, with their crying children, and scolding old women,

and listless, half-drunken loiterers. These sights, like fables, have a sort of moral in them to which Dickens was very sensitive; the important airs of nobodies on great occasions, the sadness and preoccupation of the great as they hasten by in their mourning or on their pressing affairs; the sadly comic characters of the tavern; the diligence of shopkeepers, like squirrels turning in their cages; the children peeping out everywhere like grass in an untrodden street; the charm of humble things, the nobleness of humble people, the horror of crime, the ghastliness of vice, the deft hand and shining face of virtue passing through the midst of it all; and finally a fresh wind of indifference and change blowing across our troubles and clearing the most lurid sky.

I do not know whether it was Christian charity or naturalistic insight, or a mixture of both (for they are closely akin) that attracted Dickens particularly to the deformed, the half-witted, the abandoned, or those impeded or misunderstood by virtue of some singular inner consecration. The visible moral of these things, when brutal prejudice does not blind us to it, comes very near to true philosophy; one turn of the screw, one flash of reflection, and we have understood nature and human morality and the relation between them.

In his love of roads and wayfarers, of river-ports and wharves and the idle or sinister figures that lounge about them, Dickens was like Walt Whitman; and I think a second Dickens may any day appear in America, when it is possible in that land of hurry to reach the same degree of saturation, the same unquestioning pleasure in the familiar facts. The spirit of Dickens would be better able to do justice to America than was that of Walt Whitman; because America, although it may seem nothing but a noisy nebula to the impressionist, is not a nebula but a concourse of very distinct individual bodies, natural and social, each with its definite interests and story. Walt Whitman had a sort of transcendental philosophy which swallowed the universe whole, supposing there was a universal spirit in things identical with the absolute spirit that observed them; but Dickens was

innocent of any such clap-trap, and remained a true spirit in his own person. Kindly and clear-sighted, but self-identical and unequivocally human, he glided through the slums like one of his own little heroes, uncontaminated by their squalor and confusion, courageous and firm in his clear allegiances amid the flux of things, a pale angel at the Carnival, his heart aflame, his voice always flute-like in its tenderness and warning. This is the true relation of spirit to existence, not the other which confuses them; for this earth (I cannot speak for the universe at large) has no spirit of its own, but brings forth spirits only at certain points, in the hearts and brains of frail living creatures, who like insects flit through it, buzzing and gathering what sweets they can; and it is the spaces they traverse in this career, charged with their own moral burden, that they can report on or describe, not things rolling on to infinity in their vain tides. To be hypnotized by that flood would be a heathen idolatry. Accordingly Walt Whitman, in his comprehensive democratic vistas, could never see the trees for the wood, and remained incapable, for all his diffuse love of the human herd, of ever painting a character or telling a story; the very things in which Dickens was a master. It is this life of the individual, as it may be lived in a given nation, that determines the whole value of that nation to the poet, to the moralist, and to the judicious historian. But for the excellence of the typical single life, no nation deserves to be remembered more than the sands of the sea; and America will not be a success, if every American is a failure.

Dickens entered the theater of this world by the stage door; the shabby little adventures of the actors in their private capacity replace for him the mock tragedies which they enact before a dreaming public. Mediocrity of circumstances and mediocrity of soul for ever return to the center of his stage; a more wretched or a grander existence is sometimes broached, but the pendulum soon swings back, and we return, with the relief with which we put on our slippers after the most romantic excursion, to a golden mediocrity—to mutton and beer, and to love and babies in a

suburban villa with one frowsy maid. Dickens is the poet of those acres of yellow brick streets which the traveler sees from the railway viaducts as he approaches London; they need a poet, and they deserve one, since a complete human life may very well be lived there. Their little excitements and sorrows, their hopes and humors are like those of the Wooden Midshipman in *Dombey and Son;* but the sea is not far off, and the sky—Dickens never forgets it—is above all those brief troubles. He had a sentiment in the presence of this vast flatness of human fates, in spite of their individual pungency, which I think might well be the dominant sentiment of mankind in the future; a sense of happy freedom in littleness, an open-eyed reverence and religion without words. This universal human anonymity is like a sea, an infinitive democratic desert, chock-full and yet the very image of emptiness, with nothing in it for the mind, except, as the Moslems say, the presence of Allah. Awe is the counterpart of humility—and this is perhaps religion enough. The atom in the universal vortex ought to be humble; he ought to see that, materially, he doesn't much matter, and that morally his loves are merely his own, without authority over the universe. He can admit without obloquy that he is what he is; and he can rejoice in his own being, and in that of all other things in so far as he can share it sympathetically. The apportionment of existence and of fortune is in Other Hands; his own portion is contentment, vision, love, and laughter.

Having humility, that most liberating of sentiments, having a true vision of human existence and joy in that vision, Dickens had in a superlative degree the gift of humor, of mimicry, of unrestrained farce. He was the perfect comedian. When people say Dickens exaggerates, it seems to me they can have no eyes and no ears. They probably have only *notions* of what things and people are; they accept them conventionally, at their diplomatic value. Their minds run on in the region of discourse, where there are masks only and no faces, ideas and no facts; they have little sense for those living grimaces that play from

moment to moment upon the countenance of the world. The world is a perpetual caricature of itself; at every moment it is the mockery and the contradiction of what it is pretending to be. But as it nevertheless intends all the time to be something different and highly dignified, at the next moment it corrects and checks and tries to cover up the absurd thing it was; so that a conventional world, a world of masks, is superimposed on the reality, and passes in every sphere of human interest for the reality itself. Humor is the perception of this illusion, the fact allowed to pierce here and there through the convention, whilst the convention continues to be maintained, as if we had not observed its absurdity. Pure comedy is more radical, cruder, in a certain sense less human; because comedy throws the convention over altogether, revels for a moment in the fact, and brutally says to the notions of mankind, as if it slapped them in the face, There, take that! That's what you really are! At this the polite world pretends to laugh, not tolerantly as it does at humor, but a little angrily. It does not like to see itself by chance in the glass, without having had time to compose its features for demure self-contemplation. "What a bad mirror," it exclaims; "it must be concave or convex; for surely I never looked like that. Mere caricature, farce, and horse play. Dickens exaggerates; *I* never was so sentimental as that; *I* never saw anything so dreadful; *I* don't believe there were ever any people like Quilp, or Squeers, or Serjeant Buzfuz." But the polite world is lying; there *are* such people; we are such people ourselves in our true moments, in our veritable impulses; but we are careful to stifle and to hide those moments from ourselves and from the world; to purse and pucker ourselves into the mask of our conventional personality; and so simpering, we profess that it is very coarse and inartistic of Dickens to undo our life's work for us in an instant, and remind us of what we are. And as to other people, though we may allow that considered superficially they are often absurd, we do not wish to dwell on their eccentricities, nor to mimic them. On the contrary, it is good manners to look away

quickly, to suppress a smile, and to say to ourselves that the ludicrous figure in the street is not at all comic, but a dull ordinary Christian, and that it is foolish to give any importance to the fact that its hat has blown off, that it has slipped on an orange-peel and unintentionally sat on the pavement, that it has a pimple on its nose, that its one tooth projects over its lower lip, that it is angry with things in general, and that it is looking everywhere for the penny which it holds tightly in its hand. That may fairly represent the moral condition of most of us at most times; but we do not want to think of it; we do not want to see; we gloss the fact over; we console ourselves before we are grieved, and reassert our composure before we have laughed. We are afraid, ashamed, anxious to be spared. What displeases us in Dickens is that he does not spare us; he mimics things to the full; he dilates and exhausts and repeats; he wallows. He is too intent on the passing experience to look over his shoulder, and consider whether we have not already understood, and had enough. He is not thinking of us; he is obeying the impulse of the passion, the person, or the story he is enacting. This faculty, which renders him a consummate comedian, is just what alienated from him a later generation in which people of taste were esthetes and virtuous people were higher snobs; they wanted a mincing art, and he gave them copious improvisation, they wanted analysis and development, and he gave them absolute comedy. I must confess, though the fault is mine and not his, that sometimes his absoluteness is too much for me. When I come to the death of Little Nell, or to What the Waves were always Saying, or even to the incorrigible perversities of the pretty Dora, I skip. I can't take my liquor neat in such draughts, and my inner man says to Dickens, Please don't. But then I am a coward in so many ways! There are so many things in this world that I skip, as I skip the undiluted Dickens! When I reach Dover on a rough day, I wait there until the Channel is smoother; am I not traveling for pleasure? But my prudence does not blind me to the

admirable virtue of the sailors that cross in all weathers, nor even to the automatic determination of the sea-sick ladies, who might so easily have followed my example, if they were not the slaves of their railway tickets and of their labeled luggage. They are loyal to their tour, and I to my philosophy. Yet as wrapped in my great-coat and sure of a good dinner, I pace the windy pier and soliloquize, I feel the superiority of the bluff tar, glad of breeze, stretching a firm arm to the unsteady passenger, and watching with a masterful thrill of emotion the home cliffs receding and the foreign coasts ahead. It is only courage (which Dickens had without knowing it) and universal kindness (which he knew he had) that are requisite to nerve us for a true vision of this world. And as some of us are cowards about crossing the Channel, and others about "crossing the bar," so almost everybody is a coward about his own humanity. We do not consent to be absurd, though absurd we are. We have no fundamental humility. We do not wish the moments of our lives to be caught by a quick eye in their grotesque initiative, and to be pilloried in this way before our own eyes. For that reason we don't like Dickens, and don't like comedy, and don't like the truth. Dickens could don the comic mask with innocent courage; he could wear it with a grace ease, and irresistible vivacity seldom given to men. We must go back for anything like it to the very greatest comic poets, to Shakespeare or to Aristophanes. Who else, for instance, could have penned this:

"It was all Mrs. Bumble. She *would* do it," urged Mr. Bumble; first looking round to ascertain that his partner had left the room.

"That is no excuse," replied Mr. Brownlow. "You were present on the occasion of the destruction of these trinkets, and indeed are the more guilty of the two, in the eye of the law; for the law supposes that your wife acts under your direction."

"If the law supposes that," said Mr. Bumble, squeezing his hat emphatically in both hands, "the law is a ass, a idiot. If that's the eye of the law, the law is a bachelor; and the worst

I wish the law is, that his eye may be opened by experience—by experience."

Laying great stress on the repetition of these two words, Mr. Bumble fixed his hat on very tight, and putting his hands in his pockets, followed his helpmate downstairs.

This is high comedy; the irresistible, absurd, intense dream of the old fool, personifying the law in order to convince and to punish it. I can understand that this sort of thing should not be common in English literature, nor much relished; because pure comedy is scornful, merciless, devastating, holding no door open to anything beyond. Cultivated English feeling winces at this brutality, although the common people love it in clowns and in puppet shows; and I think they are right. Dickens, who surely was tender enough, had so irresistible a comic genius that it carried him beyond the gentle humor which most Englishmen possess to the absolute grotesque reality. Squeers, for instance, when he sips the wretched dilution which he has prepared for his starved and shivering little pupils, smacks his lips and cries: "Here's richness!" It is savage comedy; humor would come in if we understood (what Dickens does not tell us) that the little creatures were duly impressed and thought the thin liquid truly delicious. I suspect that English sensibility prefers the humor and wit of Hamlet to the pure comedy of Falstaff; and that even in Aristophanes it seeks consolation in the lyrical poetry for the flaying of human life in the comedy itself. Tastes are free; but we should not deny that in merciless and rollicking comedy life is caught in the act. The most grotesque creatures of Dickens are not exaggerations or mockeries of something other than themselves; they arise because nature generates them, like toadstools; they exist because they can't help it, as we all do. The fact that these perfectly self-justified beings are absurd appears only by comparison, and from outside; circumstances, or the expectations of other people, make them ridiculous and force them to contradict themselves; but in nature

it is no crime to be exceptional. Often, but for the savagery of the average man, it would not even be a misfortune. The sleepy fat boy in *Pickwick* looks foolish; but in himself he is no more foolish, nor less solidly self-justified, than a pumpkin lying on the ground. Toots seems ridiculous; and we laugh heartily at his incoherence, his beautiful waistcoats, and his extreme modesty; but when did anybody more obviously grow into what he is because he couldn't grow otherwise? So with Mr. Pickwick, and Sam Weller, and Mrs. Gamp, and Micawber, and all the rest of this wonderful gallery; they are ridiculous only by accident, and in a context in which they never intended to appear. If Œpidus and Lear and Cleopatra do not seem ridiculous, it is only because tragic reflection has taken them out of the context in which, in real life, they would have figured. If we saw them as facts, and not as emanations of a poet's dream, we should laugh at them till doomsday; what grotesque presumption, what silly whims, what mad contradiction of the simplest realities! Yet we should not laugh at them without feeling how real their griefs were; as real and terrible as the griefs of children and of dreams. But facts, however serious inwardly, are always absurd outwardly; and the just critic of life sees both truths at once, as Cervantes did in *Don Quixote*. A pompous idealist who does not see the ridiculous in *all* things is the dupe of his sympathy and abstraction; and a clown, who does not see that these ridiculous creatures are living quite in earnest, is the dupe of his egotism. Dickens saw the absurdity, and understood the life; I think he was a good philosopher.

It is usual to compare Dickens with Thackeray, which is like comparing the grape with the gooseberry; there are obvious points of resemblance, and the gooseberry has some superior qualities of its own; but you can't make red wine of it. The wine of Dickens is of the richest, the purest, the sweetest, the most fortifying to the blood; there is distilled in it, with the perfection of comedy, the perfection of morals. I do not mean, of course, that Dickens appreciated all the values that human

life has or might have; that is beyond any man. Even the greatest philosophers, such as Aristotle, have not always much imagination to conceive forms of happiness or folly other than those which their age or their temperament reveals to them; their insight runs only to discovering the *principle* of happiness, that it is spontaneous life of any sort harmonized with circumstances. The sympathies and imagination of Dickens, vivid in their sphere, were no less limited in range; and of course it was not his business to find philosophic formulas; nevertheless I call his the perfection of morals for two reasons: that he put the distinction between good and evil in the right place, and that he felt this distinction intensely. A moralist might have excellent judgment, he might see what sort of life is spontaneous in a given being and how far it may be harmonized with circumstances, yet his heart might remain cold, he might not suffer nor rejoice with the suffering or joy he foresaw. Humanitarians like Bentham and Mill, who talked about the greatest happiness of the greatest number, might conceivably be moral prigs in their own persons, and they might have been chilled to the bone in their theoretic love of mankind, if they had had the wit to imagine in what, as a matter of fact, the majority would place their happiness. Even if their theory had been correct (which I think it was in intention, though not in statement) they would then not have been perfect moralists, because their maxims would not have expressed their hearts. In expressing their hearts, they ought to have embraced one of those forms of "idealism" by which men fortify themselves in their bitter passions or in their helpless commitments; for they do not wish mankind to be happy in its own way, but in theirs. Dickens was not one of those moralists who summon every man to do himself the greatest violence so that he may not offend them, nor defeat their ideals. Love of the good of others is something that shines in every page of Dickens with a truly celestial splendor. How entirely limpid is his sympathy with life—a sympathy uncontaminated by dogma or pedantry or snobbery or bias of any

kind! How generous is this keen, light spirit, how pure this open heart! And yet, in spite of this extreme sensibility, not the least wobbling; no deviation from a just severity of judgment, from an uncompromising distinction between white and black. And this happens as it ought to happen; sympathy is not checked by a flatly contrary prejudice or commandment, by some categorical imperative irrelevant to human nature; the check, like the cheer, comes by tracing the course of spontaneous impulse and circumstances that inexorably lead it to success or to failure. There is a bed to this stream, freely as the water may flow; when it comes to this precipice it must leap, when it runs over these pebbles it must sing, and when it spreads into that marsh it must become livid and malarial. The very sympathy with human impulse quickens in Dickens the sense of danger; his very joy in joy makes him stern to what kills it. How admirably drawn are his surly villains! No rhetorical vilification of them, as in a sermon; no exaggeration of their qualms or fears; rather a sense of how obvious and human all their courses seem from their own point of view; and yet no sentimental apology for them, no romantic worship of rebels in their madness or crime. The pity of it, the waste of it all, are seen not by a second vision but by the same original vision which revealed the lure and the drift of the passion. Vice is a monster here of such sorry mien, that the longer we see it the more we deplore it; that other sort of vice which Pope found so seductive was perhaps only some innocent impulse artificially suppressed, and called a vice because it broke out inconveniently and displeased the company. True vice is human nature strangled by the suicide of attempting the impossible. Those so self-justified villains of Dickens never elude their fates. Bill Sikes is not let off, neither is Nancy; the oddly benevolent Magwitch does not escape from the net, nor does the unfortunate young Richard Carstone, victim of the Circumlocution Office. The horror and ugliness of their fall are rendered with the hand of a master; we see here, as in the world, that in spite of the

romanticists it is not virtue to rush enthusiastically along any road. I think Dickens is one of the best friends mankind has ever had. He has held the mirror up to nature, and of its reflected fragments has composed a fresh world, where the men and women differ from real people only in that they live in a literary medium, so that all ages and places may know them. And they are worth knowing, just as one's neighbors are, for their picturesque characters and their pathetic fates. Their names should be in every child's mouth; they ought to be adopted members of every household. Their stories cause the merriest and the sweetest chimes to ring in the fancy, without confusing our moral judgment or alienating our interest from the motley commonplaces of daily life. In every English-speaking home, in the four quarters of the globe, parents and children will do well to read Dickens aloud of a winter's evening; they will love winter, and one another, and God the better for it. What a wreath that will be of ever-fresh holly, thick with bright berries, to hang to this poet's memory—the very crown he would have chosen!

THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD*

HENRY JAMES

(American by birth and European by adoption, Henry James lived after he was twenty-seven, for the most part, in England. In the republic of Letters he was, indeed, international. His theories of fiction came largely from French and Russian realists, and the material which his pen could transmute most readily into art was the American character brought into contact for the first time with European civilization. His first great novels, such as *Daisy Miller, The American,* and *The Portrait of a Lady* are early presentations of the favorite theme to which he returned in later years in *The Ambassador.*

To Henry James the art of fiction was a passion that consumed an entire lifetime. Compared to such years of devoted and painstaking effort the one desultory effort of Goldsmith seems as nothing. The infinite care that the scrupulous presentation of the drama of the inner life demands of the artist was wholly foreign to the novel of Goldsmith's time. The author of *The Vicar of Wakefield* would never have stuck to one thing long enough to write according to the more recent formula. His method was to fling together into a preposterous plot the materials that eighteenth century convention had provided for the novelist: the eccentric old gentleman, the sentimental young lady, the villain, the abduction, the sermonizing, and various other matters more or less necessary. How could he do this and still produce a novel that is yet being read and re-read with such pleasure even by those who recognize its many faults? This is the question that James tries to answer. And his answer is a

* An "Introduction" to *The Vicar of Wakefield.* The Century Co., 1900.

tribute to the magic quality of art and to his own unerring perception of that which is elusive and intangible. The solution is to be found in the amenity of Goldsmith's style, in the personality which savors every page. So the secret of art remains locked up in the artist.)

THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

It is a sign of the wonderful fortune of *The Vicar of Wakefield* that the properest occasions for speaking of it continue to present themselves. Everything has been said about it, and said again and again, but the book has long since diffused an indulgence that extends even to commentators. In the degree of its fortune, indeed, it seems almost single of its kind. Stretch the indulgence as we may, Goldsmith's story still fails, somehow, on its face, to account for its great position and its remarkable career. Read as one of the masterpieces by a person not acquainted with our literature, it might easily give an impression that this literature is not immense. It has been reproduced, at all events, in a thousand editions, and the end is not yet. All the arts of book-making and of editing, all the graces of typography and of illustration, have been lavished upon its text. Painters, playwrights, and musicians have again and again drawn upon it, and there is not a happy turn in it, not a facetious figure nor a vivid image, that has not become familiar and famous. We point our phrases with its good things, and the fact that everybody knows them seems only to make them better.

If, therefore, I speak of something disproportionate in the case, between effect and cause, between so many honors and the object they are heaped upon, it is to couple the matter with an instant confession. If I have just re-read the book, I have re-read it after years, and the length of the interval has perhaps something to do with the force of the conviction brought freshly home to me—the idea that a literary production may have its luck as well as its merit, and an author his star as well as his genius. We are tempted to say of *The Vicar of Wakefield*

that it has been happy in the manner in which a happy man is happy—a man, say, who has married an angel or been appointed to a sinecure. These various fates of books are to some extent a mystery and a riddle; but what is most striking in the fortune of Goldsmith's story is that, though we fail to explain it completely, we grudge it perhaps less than in any other case. The thing has succeeded by its incomparable amenity. That is a quality by itself, and *The Vicar* gives us the best chance we shall meet to catch this particular influence in the very fact. It has operated here as almost never—for it has operated almost singly—to produce a classic; and we say much in recognizing that under its charm we really resist the irritation of having to define that character. It makes us wonder once more what a classic consists of, and offers us abundant occasion for the study of the question, which it presents in conditions singularly simple and undisturbed.

What we most seem to gather, in the light of this truth, is that if a book have amenity it may, at a stretch, have scarcely anything else. It would not be difficult, on some such ground, I think, to go into the question of how little else, really, "The Vicar" has. I have felt its natural note, on this renewal, as much as ever, but, one by one and page after page, I have missed other matters. Nothing, perhaps, could be, critically, more interesting than to see them successively go and still leave the soft residuum that keeps the work green. It brings us back, of course, to the old, old miracle of style, and puts us in danger of relapsing again into the new, new heresy that style is everything; only to wake up, however, with the shock of the sense that that way madness lies, that *a priori* such a doctrine is fatal. And yet, as our masterpiece stands, we feel that, on other counts, it is really the infancy of art. A mature reader may well be stupefied at some of the claims that have been made for it in respect of skill of portraiture and liveliness of presentation. The first hundred pages—the first half of the first volume of the original edition—contain nearly all the happiest strokes. These, there-

fore, are comprised in but a quarter of the whole, and I suspect, moreover, that if we should reckon them up—I mean the felicities that have become familiar and famous—they would be found to consist of no great number: of the blue bed and the brown, of Moses and his spectacles, of the Flamboroughs and their oranges, of the family piece by the "limner,"—the prettiest page of all,—of Shakespeare and the musical glasses, of Jernigan and the garters, of Mr. Burchell and his "Fudge."

Add to the above the few comparatively sharp little lights in the image of Mrs. Primrose, and what we are left to fall back upon is mere lovability. As a story, as we say nowadays, I am so unconscious of anything vivid in the several figures that I can only be astonished at the claim for difference and contrast in Olivia and Sophia. Such results are easily produced, surely, if the claim is just. The young rake, the base seducer, has so little dramatic substance that we almost resent, on behalf of the lovely Olivia, and indeed on behalf of the whole amiable family, that so much ravage should be represented as wrought by so immaterial a presence. The young man never sounds, never looks at us; and his kinsman, the virtuous Burchell, keeps him nebulous company. The thing goes to pieces—so far as it has been held together at all—from the moment little Dick comes in with the cry that his sister has gone. We are made, in a manner, to see the scene before the child's entrance—it gives us the climax of what is vivid in the first volume; but what immediately ensues illustrates the faintness of the author's touch in any business of emotion or action. His pathos and his tragedy fall, throughout, much below his humor, and the second half of the tale, dropping altogether, becomes almost infantine in its awkwardness, its funny coincidences, and big stitches of white thread.

No one would say as much as this, I hasten to add, and mean it as a reproach. Criticism, I think, does not get near the thing at all, for it only goes so far as to suggest that if it *were* to criticize— In fact, it never pretends to that, for it feels

that we are never really troubled, and that to do so would spoil one of the most delicate of all artistic oddities. *The Vicar* throws itself upon our sensibility with a slenderness of means that suggests—for this very slimness—some angular, archaic nudity. I spoke above of some passages as "faint," and the privilege of the whole thing is just to be delightfully so. This faintness, like the faded tone of an old sampler, an old spinet, the ink of an old letter, is of the positive essence of the charm and spell, so that here and there the least little lights gleam in it with effect: we just catch the white stocking of Moses and the brown of the hair that his sisters have tied with ribbon; we catch, in the pleasant paleness, the deep hue of the Flamborough oranges. In short, we make to our own mind, all the while, a plea for the peculiar grace, and feel that, in the particulars, it loses nothing through the want of art. One admits the particulars with the sense that, as regards the place the thing has taken, it remains, by a strange little law of its own, quite undamaged—simply stands there smiling with impunity.

It is the spoiled child of our literature. We cling to it as to our most precious example that we, too, in prose, have achieved the last amiability. Thus it is that the book converts everything it contains into a happy case of exemption and fascination—a case of imperturbable and inscrutable classicism. It is a question of tone. The tone is exquisite, and that's the end of it. It takes us through all the little gaps and slips, through all the artless looseness of the Vicar's disasters and rescues, through his confused and unconvincing captivity and his wonderful accidents and recognitions. It makes these things amusing, makes them most human even when—for there is no other way of putting it—they are most absurd. I will not say it makes them live, for I think it scarce does that at all, but leaves them to linger on as spiced, dead rose-leaves in a bowl, inanimate, fragrant, intensely present. There is not a small drollery at the end that does not work into the very texture that takes us: the punishment of the wicked seducer by being cut down to a single foot-

man; the retinue of so many of these who attest, at the final hour, the real philanthropy of Sir William; the perpetual food that makes its appearance as the climax of everything; the supper of two well-dressed dishes that dissipates the gloom of the prison; the delightful forty pounds distributed among the captives, and the still more delightful "coarser provisions" scattered among the populace.

If the tone is the great thing, this comes, doubtless, to saying that the Vicar himself is, and that the book has flourished through having so much of him. It is he who is the success of his story; he is always kept true, is what we call to-day "sustained," without becoming pompous or hollow. The especial beauty of this is surely that it contains something of the very soul of Goldsmith. It is the most natural imagination of the unspotted that any production, perhaps, offers, and the exhibition of the man himself —by which I mean of the author—combines with his instinctive taste to make the classicism for which we praise him. These two things, the frankness of his sweetness and the beautiful ease of his speech, melt together—with no other aid, as I have hinted, worth mentioning—to form his style. I am afraid I cannot go further than this in the way of speculation as to how a classic is grown. In the open air is perhaps the most we can say. Goldsmith's style is the flower of what I have called his amenity, and his amenity the making of that independence of almost everything by which *The Vicar* has triumphed. The books that live, apparently, are very personal, though there are many defunct, of course, even with that qualification.

The author of this one never, at any rate, lets go our hand; and we, on our side, keep hold with a kind of sense, which is one of the most touching things our literature gives us, of all that, by doing so, we make up to him for. It helps us to look with a certain steadiness on his battered and miserable life. It helps us even to evoke with a certain joy the free, incurable Irish play of fancy and of character that, in the most English of all English ages and circles, drew down on him so much ridicule. There was

scarce a difficulty, a disappointment, an humiliation, or a bitterness of which he had not intimate and repeated knowledge; and yet the heavy heart that went through all this overflows in the little book as optimism of the purest water—as good humor, as good taste, and as a drollery that, after all, has oftener its point than its innocence. For these reasons, it would seem, fortune has singled him out, distinguished him with extraordinary favor, decreed that he should be forever known to us in an exceptionally human way. Never was such a revenge against the superior and the patronizing. The spirit still speaks to us of all that was taken to produce it, all the privation and pain and abasement, all the ugliness of circumstance and air; so we piously pluck it and keep it, press it between the leaves of the English prose that we show and boast of, treat it as a rare, fine flower that has sprouted in a rough, hard soil.

DON QUIXOTE*

Sir Walter Raleigh

(Sir Walter Raleigh was for eighteen years until his death in 1922 professor of English literature at Oxford. He was also a critic of unusual originality and the master of an uncommonly felicitous style. His *History of the English Novel* (1894) and his essays on *Style* (1897) and *Romance* (1917) were written with the ingratiating ease that flows from the conjunction of a trained mind and power of imagination.

These qualities are found also in his essay on *Don Quixote.* As an example of critical writing, the essay merits examination. The story is outlined; Cervantes' life is told; but both recitals are brief and appropriately subordinated to the author's purpose. This purpose is to give us a new conception of the character of the hero. The ordinary understanding has been that Sancho Panza represents the traditional common sense of uneducated mankind, whereas Don Quixote those ludicrously impractical outbursts of idealism which are a consequence of too much reading within too circumscribed limits. This argument Raleigh refutes. He does not deny that Don Quixote is guilty of absurd actions; he does not deny that any idealism itself from a certain point of view is absurd and impractical. But he is insistent that to Cervantes Don Quixote was a hero. Sancho Panza is his squire, who not only obeys his commands, but when he is left to himself is not a highly successful colonial administrator. Sancho Panza's attachment for his master Raleigh finds admirable. Don Quixote, though occasionally imprudent, is no fool. He is rather the saint whom the world rejects, but who is as truly a follower of Christ, and no more absurd a one, than that other of Assisi.)

* From London *Times Literary Supplement,* 1916.

DON QUIXOTE

A SPANISH knight, about fifty years of age, who lived in great poverty in a village of La Mancha, gave himself up so entirely to reading the romances of chivalry, of which he had a large collection, that in the end they turned his brain, and nothing would satisfy him but that he must ride abroad on his old horse, armed with spear and helmet, a knight-errant, to encounter all adventures, and to redress the innumerable wrongs of the world. He induced a neighbor of his, a poor and ignorant peasant called Sancho Panza, mounted on a very good ass, to accompany him as squire. The knight saw the world only in the mirror of his beloved romances; he mistook inns for enchanted castles, windmills for giants, and country wenches for exiled princesses. His high spirit and his courage never failed him, but his illusions led him into endless trouble. In the name of justice and chivalry he intruded himself on all whom he met, and assaulted all whom he took to be making an oppressive or discourteous use of power. He and his poor squire were beaten, trounced, cheated, and ridiculed on all hands, until in the end, by the kindliness of his old friends in the village, and with the help of some new friends who had been touched by the amiable and generous character of his illusions, the knight was cured of his whimsies and was led back to his home in the village, there to die.

That is the story of Don Quixote: it seems a slight framework for what, without much extravagance, may be called the wisest and most splendid book in the world. It is an old man's book; there is in it all the wisdom of a fiery heart that has learned patience. Shakespeare and Cervantes died on the same day, but if Cervantes had died at the same age as Shakespeare we

should have had no *Don Quixote*. Shakespeare himself has written nothing so full of the diverse stuff of experience, so quietly and steadily illuminated by gentle wisdom, so open-eyed in discerning the strength of the world; and Shakespeare himself is not more courageous in championing the rights of the gallant heart. Suppose the Governor of Barataria had been called on to decide the cause between these two great authors. His judgments were often wonderfully simple and obvious. Perhaps he would have ruled that whereas Shakespeare died at the age of fifty-two and Cervantes lived seventeen years longer, a man shall give his days and nights to the study of Shakespeare until he is older than ever Shakespeare was, and then, for the solace of his later years, shall pass on to the graver school of Cervantes. Not every man lives longer than Shakespeare; and, of those who do, not every man masters the art and craft of growing older with the passage of years, so that, by this rule, the Spanish gentleman would have a much smaller circle of intimates than the High Bailiff's son of Stratford. And so he has; yet his world-wide popularity is none the less assured. He has always attracted, and will always attract, a great company of readers who take a simple and legitimate delight in the comic distresses of the deluded Don, in the tricks put upon him, in the woful absurdity of his appearance, in the many love-stories and love-songs that he hears, in the variety of the characters that he meets, in the wealth of the incidents and events that spring up, a joyous crop, wherever he sets his foot, and not least, perhaps, in the beatings, poundings, scratchings, and tumblings in the mire that are his daily portion. That is to say, those who care little or nothing for Don Quixote may yet take pleasure in the life that is in his book; and his book is full of life.

We have no very ample record of the life experiences of Cervantes, which are distilled in this, his greatest book. We know that he was a soldier, and fought against the Turks at Lepanto, where his left hand was maimed for life; that he was made prisoner some years later by the Moors, and suffered five years'

captivity at Algiers; that he attempted with others to escape, and when discovered and cross-examined took the whole responsibility on himself; that at last he was ransomed by the efforts of his family and friends, and returned to Spain, there to live as best he could the life of a poor man of letters, with intermittent Government employ, for thirty-six more years. He wrote sonnets and plays, pawned his family's goods, and was well acquainted with the inside of prisons. He published the First Part of *Don Quixote* in 1605—that is to say, in his fifty-eighth year—and thenceforward enjoyed a high reputation, though his poverty continued. In 1615 the Second Part of *Don Quixote* appeared, wherein the author makes delightful play with the First Part by treating it as a book well known to all the characters of the story. In the following year he died, clothed in the Franciscan habit, and was buried in the convent of the Barefooted Trinitarian Nuns in Madrid. No stone marks his grave, but his spirit still wanders the world in the person of the finest gentleman of all the realms of fact and fable, who still maintains in discourse with all whom he meets that the thing of which the world has most need is knights-errant, to do honor to women, to fight for the cause of the oppressed, and to right the wrong. "This, then, gentlemen," he may still be heard saying, "it is to be a knight-errant, and what I have spoken of is the order of chivalry, in the which, as I have already said, I, though a sinner, have made profession; the same which these famous knights profess do I profess; and that is why I am traveling through these deserts and solitary places, in quest of adventures, with deliberate resolve to offer my arm and my person to the most dangerous adventure which fortune may present, in aid of the weak and needy." And the world is still incredulous and dazed. "By these words which he uttered," says the author in brief comment on the foregoing speech, "the travelers were quite convinced that Don Quixote was out of his wits."

It has often been said, and is still sometimes repeated by good students of Cervantes, that his main object in writing *Don*

Quixote was to put an end to the influence of the romances of chivalry. It is true that these romances were the fashionable reading of his age, that many of them were trash, and that some of them were pernicious trash. It is true also that the very scheme of his book lends itself to a scathing exposure of their weaknesses, and that the moral is pointed in the scene of the Inquisition of the Books, where the priest, the barber, the housekeeper, and the niece destroy the greater part of his library by fire. But how came it that Cervantes knew the romances so well, and dwelt on some of their incidents in such loving detail? Moreover, it is worth noting that not a few of them are excluded by name from the general condemnation. *Amadis of Gaul* is spared, because it is "the best of all books of the kind." Equal praise is given to *Palmerin of England;* while of *Tirante the White* the priest himself declares that it is a treasure of delight and a mine of pastime.

> "Truly, I declare to you, gossip, that in its style this is the best book in the world. Here the knights eat and sleep, and die in their beds, and make their wills before they die, with other things in which the rest of the books of this kind are wanting."

But even stronger evidence of the esteem that Cervantes felt for the best of the romances is to be found in his habit of linking their names with the poems of Homer and Virgil. So, in the course of instruction given by Don Quixote to Sancho Panza, while they dwelt in the wilds of the Sierra Morena, Ulysses is cited as the model of prudence and patience, Æneas as the greatest of pious sons and expert captains, and Amadis as the "pole star, the morning star, the sun of valiant and enamored knights, whom all we have to copy, who do battle under the banner of love and chivalry." It would indeed be a strange thing if a book which is so brave an exercise of the creative imagination were mainly destructive in its aim, and deserved no higher honor than a scavenger. The truth is that the book is so many-sided

that all kinds of tastes and beliefs can find their warrant in it. The soul of it is an irony so profound that but few of its readers have explored it to the depths. It is like a mine, deep below deep; and much good treasure is to be found at the more easily accessible levels. All irony criticizes the imperfect ideas and theories of mankind, not by substituting for them other ideas and other theories, less imperfect, but by placing the facts of life, in mute comment, alongside of the theories. The Ruler of the World is the great master of irony; and man has been permitted to share some part of his enjoyment in the purifying power of fact. The weaker and more querulous members of the race commonly try to enlist the facts in the service of their pet ideas. A grave and deep spirit like Cervantes knows that the facts will endure no such servitude. They will not take orders from those who call for their verdict, nor will they be content to speak only when they are asked to speak. They intrude suddenly, in the most amazing and irrelevant fashion, on the carefully ordered plans of humanity. They cannot be explained away, and many a man who thought to have guarded himself against surprise has been surprised by love and death.

Every one sees the irony of *Don Quixote* in its first degree, and enjoys it in its more obvious forms. This absurd old gentleman, who tries to put his antiquated ideas into action in a busy, selfish, prosy world, is a figure of fun even to the meanest intelligence. But, with more thought, there comes a check to our frivolity. Is not all virtue and all goodness in the same case as Don Quixote? Does the author, after all, mean to say that the world is right, and that those who try to better it are wrong? If that is what he means, how is it that at every step of our journey we come to like the Don better, until in the end we can hardly put a limit to our love and reverence for him? Is it possible that the criticism is double-edged, and that what we are celebrating with our laughter is the failure of the world?

A wonderful thing in Cervantes' handling of his story is his absolute honesty and candor. He does not mince matters. His

world behaves as the world may be expected to behave when its daily interests are violently disordered by a lunatic. Failure upon failure dogs the steps of poor Don Quixote, and he has no popularity to redeem his material disasters. "He who writes of me," says the Don pensively, in his discussion with the bachelor Sampson, "will please very few"; and the only comfort the bachelor can find for him is that the number of fools is infinite, and that the First Part of his adventures has delighted them all. As an example of Cervantes' treatment take one of the earliest of these adventures, the rescue of the boy Andres from the hands of his oppressor. As he rode away from the inn, on the first day of his knighthood, while yet he was unfurnished with a squire, Don Quixote heard cries of complaint from a thicket near by. He thanked Heaven for giving him so early an opportunity of service, and turned his horse aside to where he found a farmer beating a boy. Don Quixote, with all knightly formality, called the farmer a coward, and challenged him to single combat. The farmer, terrified by the strange apparition, explained that the boy was his servant and by gross carelessness had lost his sheep for him at the rate of one a day. The matter was at last settled by the farmer liberating the boy and promising to pay him in full his arrears of wages; whereupon the knight rode away, well pleased. Then the farmer tied up the boy again, and beat him more severely than ever, till at the last he loosed him, and told him to go and seek redress from his champion. "So the boy departed sobbing, and his master stayed behind laughing, and after this manner did the valorous Don Quixote right that wrong." Later on, when the knight and his squire are in the wilds, with the company whom chance has gathered around them, the boy appears again, and Don Quixote narrates the story of his deliverance as an illustration of the benefits conferred on the world by knight-errantry.

"All that your worship says is true," replies the lad, "but the end of the business was very much the contrary of what

your worship imagines." "How contrary?" said Don Quixote. "Did he not pay thee, then?" "He not only did not pay me," said the boy, "but as soon as your worship had got outside the wood, and we were alone, he tied me again to the same tree, and gave me so many lashes that he left me flayed like St. Bartholomew; and at every lash he gave me, he uttered some jest or scoff, to make a mock of your worship; and if I had not felt so much pain, I would have laughed at what he said. . . . For all this your worship is to blame, because if you had held on your way, and had not meddled with other people's business, my master would have been content to give me a dozen or two lashes, and afterwards he would have released me and paid me what he owed. But as your worship insulted him and called him bad names, his anger was kindled, and as he could not avenge himself on you, he let fly the tempest on me."

Don Quixote sadly admits his error, and confesses that he ought to have remembered that "no churl keeps the word he gives if he finds that it does not suit him to keep it." But he promises Andres that he will yet see him righted; and with that the boy's terror awakes. "For the love of God, sir knight-errant," he says, "if you meet me again, and see me being cut to pieces, do not rescue me, nor help me, but leave me to my pain; for, however great it be, it cannot be greater than will come to me from the help of your worship—whom, with all the knights-errant ever born into the world, may God confound!" With that he ran away, and Don Quixote stood very much abashed by his story, so that the rest of the company had to take great care that they did not laugh outright and put him to confusion.

At no point in the story does Cervantes permit the reader to forget that the righter of wrongs must not look in this world for either success or praise. The indignities heaped upon that gentle and heroic soul almost revolt the reader, as Charles Lamb remarked. He is beaten and kicked; he has his teeth knocked out, and consoles himself with the thought that these hardships

are incident to his profession; his face is all bedaubed with mud, and he answers with grave politeness to the mocks of those who deride him. When he stands sentry on the back of his horse at the inn, to guard the sleepers, the stable wench, Maritornes, gets him to reach up his hand to an upper window, or rather a round hole in the wall of the hayloft, whereupon she slips a running noose over his wrist and ties the rope firmly to a bar within the loft. In this posture, and in continual danger of being hung by the arm if his horse should move away, he stands till dawn, when four travelers knock at the gate of the inn. He at once challenges them for their discourtesy in disturbing the slumbers of those whom he is guarding. Even the Duke and the Duchess, who feel kindly to Don Quixote and take him under their care, are quite ready to play rough practical jokes on him. It is while he is their guest that his face is all scratched and clawed by frightened cats turned loose in his bedroom at night. His friends in the village were kinder than this, but they, to get him home, carried him through the country in a latticed cage on poles, like a wild beast, for the admiration of the populace; and he bethought himself, "As I am a new knight in the world, and the first that hath revived the forgotten exercise of chivalry, these are newly invented forms of enchantment." His spirit rises superior to all his misfortunes, and his mind remains as serene as a cloudless sky.

But Don Quixote, it may be objected, is mad. Here the irony of Cervantes finds a deeper level. Don Quixote is a high-minded idealist, who sees all things by the light of his own lofty preconceptions. To him every woman is beautiful and adorable; everything that is said to him is worthy to be heard with attention and respect; every community of men, even the casual assemblage of lodgers at an inn, is a society founded on strict rules of mutual consideration and esteem. He shapes his behavior in accordance with these ideas, and is laughed at for his pains. But he has a squire, Sancho Panza, who is a realist and loves food and sleep, who sees the world as it is, by the light of common

day. Sancho, it might be supposed, is sane, and supplies a sure standard whereby to measure his master's deviations from the normal. Not at all; Sancho, in his own way, is as mad as his master. If the one is betrayed by fantasy, the other is betrayed, with as ludicrous a result, by common sense. The thing is well seen in the question of the island, the government of which is to be entrusted to Sancho when Don Quixote comes into his kingdom. Sancho, though he would have seen through the pretenses of any merely corrupt bargainer, recognizes at once that his master is disinterested and truthful, and he believes all he hears about the island. He spends much thought on the scheme, and passes many criticisms on it. Sometimes he protests that he is quite unfit for the position of a governor, and that his wife would cut a poor figure as a governor's lady. At other times he vehemently asserts that many men of much less ability than himself are governors, and eat every day off silver plate. Then he hears that, if an island should not come to hand, he is to be rewarded with a slice of a continent, and at once he stipulates that his domain shall be situated on the coast, so that he may put his subjects to a profitable use by selling them into slavery. It is not a gloss upon Cervantes to say that Sancho is mad; the suggestion is made, with significant repetition, in the book itself. "As the Lord liveth," says the barber, addressing the squire, "I begin to think that thou oughtest to keep him company in the cage, and that thou art as much enchanted as he. In an evil day wast thou impregnated with his promises, and it was a sorrowful hour when the island of thy longings entered thy skull."

So these two, in the opinion of the neighbors, are both mad, yet most of the wisdom of the book is theirs, and when neither of them is talking, the book falls into mere commonplace. And this also is many times recognized and commented on in the book itself. Sometimes it is the knight, and sometimes the squire, whose conversation makes the hearers marvel that one who talks with so much wisdom, justice, and discernment should

act so foolishly. Certainly the book is a paradise of delightful discourse wherein all topics are handled and are presented in a new guise. The dramatic setting, which is the meaning of the book, is never forgotten; yet the things said are so good that when they are taken out of their setting they shine still, though with diminished splendor. What could be better than Don Quixote's treatment of the question of lineage, when he is considering his future claim to marry the beautiful daughter of a Christian or paynim King? "There are two kinds of lineage," he remarks. "The difference is this—that some were what they are not, and others are what they were not; and when the thing is looked into I might prove to be one of those who had a great and famous origin, with which the King, my father-in-law who is to be, must be content." Or what could be wiser than Sancho's account of his resignation of the governorship? "Yesterday morning I left the island as I found it, with the same streets, houses, and titles which they had when I went there. I have borrowed nothing of nobody, nor mixed myself up with the making of profits, and though I thought to make some profitable laws, I did not make any of them, for I was afraid they would not be kept, which would be just the same as if they had never been made." Many of those who come across the pair in the course of their wanderings fall under the fascination of their talk. Not only so, but the world of imagination in which the two wanderers live proves so attractive, the infection of their ideas is so strong, that, long before the end of the story is reached, a motley company of people, from the Duke and Duchess down to the villagers, have set their own business aside in order to take part in the make-believe, and to be the persons of Don Quixote's dream. There was never any Kingdom of Barataria; but the hearts of all who knew him were set on seeing how Sancho would comport himself in the office of Governor, so the Duke lent a village for the purpose, and it was put in order and furnished with officers of State for the part that it had to play. In this way some of the fancies of the talkers almost

struggle into existence, and the dream of Don Quixote makes the happiness it does not find.

Nothing in the story is more touching than the steadily growing attachment and mutual admiration of the knight and the squire. Each deeply respects the wisdom of the other, though Don Quixote, whose taste in speech is courtly, many times complains of Sancho's swarm of proverbs. Each is influenced by the other; the knight insists on treating the squire with courtesies due to an equal, and poor Sancho, in the end, declares that not all the governments of the world shall tempt him away from the service of his beloved master. What, then, are we to think, and what does their creator think, of those two madmen, whose lips drop wisdom? "Mark you, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "there are two kinds of beauty—one of the soul, and another of the body. That of the soul excelleth in knowledge, in modesty, in fine conduct, in liberality and good breeding; and all these virtues are found in, and may belong to, an ugly man. . . . I see full well, Sancho, that I am not beautiful, but I know also that I am not deformed, and it is enough for a man of honor to be no monster; he may be well loved if he possesses those gifts of soul which I have mentioned." Sometimes, at the height of his frenzy, the knight seems almost inspired. So, when the shepherds have entertained him, he offers, by way of thanks, to maintain against all comers the fame and beauty of the shepherdesses, and utters his wonderful little speech on gratitude:

> "For the most part, he who receives is inferior to him who gives; and hence God is above all, because he is, above all, the great giver; and the gifts of man cannot be equal to those of God, for there is an infinite distance between them; and the narrowness and insufficiency of the gifts of man is eked out by gratitude."

There cannot be too much of this kind of madness. Well may Don Antonio cry out on the bachelor Sampson, who dresses

himself as the Knight of the Silver Moon and overthrows Don Quixote in fight:

> "O sir, may God forgive you the wrong you have done to all the world in desiring to make a sane man of the most gracious madman that the world contains! Do you not perceive that the profit which shall come from the healing of Don Quixote can never be equal to the pleasure which is caused by his ecstasies?"

What if the world itself is mad, not with the ecstasy of Don Quixote, nor with the thrifty madness of Sancho, but with a flat kind of madness, a makeshift compromise between faith and doubt? All men have a vein of Quixotry somewhere in their nature. They can be counted on, in most things, to follow the beaten path of interest and custom, till suddenly there comes along some question on which they refuse to appeal to interest; they take their stand on principle, and are adamant. All men know in themselves the mood of Sancho, when he says:

> "I have heard the preachers preach that we should love our Lord for himself alone, without being moved to it by the hope of glory or the fear of pain; but, for my own part, I would love him for what he is able to do for me."

These two moods, the mood of Quixote and the mood of Sancho, seem to divide between them most of the splendors and most of the comforts of human life. It is rare to find either mood in its perfection. A man who should consistently indulge in himself the mood of the unregenerate Sancho would be a rogue, though, if he preserved good temper in his doings, he would be a pleasant rogue. The man who should maintain in himself the mood of Quixote would be something very like a saint. The saints of the Church Militant would find no puzzle and no obscurity in the character of the Knight of La Mancha. Some of them, perhaps, would understand, better than Don Quixote understood, that the full record of his doings, compiled by

Cervantes, is both a tribute to the saintly character, and a criticism of it. They certainly could not fail to discover the religious kernel of the book, as the world, in the easy confidence of its own superiority, has failed to discover it. They would know that whoso loseth his life shall save it; they would not find it difficult to understand how Don Quixote, and, in his own degree, Sancho, was willing to be a fool, that he, and the world with him, might be made wise. Above all, they would appreciate the more squalid misadventures of Don Quixote, for, unlike the public, which recognizes the saint by his aureole, they would know, none better, that the way they have chosen is the way of contempt, and that Christianity was nursed in a manger.

THE NOVEL DÉMEUBLÉ *

WILLA CATHER

(Willa Sibert Cather was born in Winchester, Virginia, December 7, 1876. Her impressionable years were spent in the West however, for, when she was nine years old, her family settled on a ranch in Nebraska. After attending high school at the town of Red Cloud and being graduated from the University of Nebraska, she entered newspaper work and was on the staff of the Pittsburgh *Daily Leader* from 1897 to 1901. From 1906 to 1912 she was an assistant editor of *McClure's Magazine*.

After writing verse and short stories she turned to the novel and is now known as one of our best contemporary novelists. In *The Song of the Lark*, *My Antonia*, and the opening chapters of *One of Ours*, she has given us warm and colorful pictures of life among the immigrants on the prairie lands. *A Lost Lady* serves best to illustrate the theories set forth in this essay. In the earlier novels she had not altogether freed herself from subjection to external details—to furniture. But in *A Lost Lady* she achieves a detachment from her material which enables her to present her scene by suggestion rather than by the laborious enumeration of details. As she points out, external things are important for the novelist only as they express the emotions of people, not in themselves. In fiction, as in other arts, the artist, by some secret of his own creative genius, escapes the necessity of communicating his impression of life directly and literally. The more he resorts to description and exposition the less his picture will have in it the same elusive and intangible quality of life itself. Art represents; it cannot explain that which

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is inexplicable. But it does better; it is sometimes capable of representing life in such terms as to heighten our sense of its abiding mystery and charm. *A Lost Lady* possesses this magic quality of charm, which we associate with the choicest art.)

THE NOVEL DÉMEUBLÉ

The novel, for a long while, has been over-furnished. The property-man has been so busy on its pages, the importance of material objects and their vivid presentation have been so stressed, that we take it for granted whoever can observe, and can write the English language, can write a novel. Often the latter qualification is considered unnecessary.

In any discussion of the novel, one must make it clear whether one is talking about the novel as a form of amusement, or as a form of art; since they serve very different purposes and in very different ways. One does not wish the egg one eats for breakfast, or the morning paper, to be made of the stuff of immortality. The novel manufactured to entertain great multitudes of people must be considered exactly like a cheap soap or a cheap perfume, or cheap furniture. Fine quality is a distinct disadvantage in articles made for great numbers of people who do not want quality but quantity, who do not want a thing that "wears," but who want change,—a succession of new things that are quickly threadbare and can be lightly thrown away. Does any one pretend that if the Woolworth-store windows were piled high with Tanagra figurines at ten cents, they could for a moment compete with Kewpie brides in the popular esteem? Amusement is one thing; enjoyment of art is another.

Every writer who is an artist knows that his "power of observation," and his "power of description," form but a low part of his equipment. He must have both, to be sure; but he knows that the most trivial of writers often have a very good observation. Mérimée said in his remarkable essay on Gogol: "L'art de choisir parmi les innombrable traits que nous offre la nature

est, après tout, bien plus difficile que celui de les observer avec attention et de les rendre avec exactitude."

There is a popular superstition that "realism" asserts itself in the cataloguing of a great number of material objects, in explaining mechanical processes, the methods of operating manufacturies and trades, and in minutely and unsparingly describing physical sensation. But is not realism, more than it is anything else, an attitude of mind on the part of the writer toward his material, a vague definition of the sympathy and candor with which he accepts, rather than chooses his theme? Is the story of a banker who is unfaithful to his wife and who ruins himself by speculation in trying to gratify the caprices of his mistresses, at all reinforced by a masterly exposition of the banking system, our whole system of credits, the methods of the Stock Exchange? Of course, if the story is thin, these things do reinforce it in a sense,—any amount of red meat thrown into the scale to make the beam dip. But are the banking system and the Stock Exchange worth being written about at all? Have such things any place in imaginative art?

The automatic reply to this question is the name of Balzac. Yes, certainly, Balzac tried out the value of literalness in the novel, tried it out to the uttermost, as Wagner did the value of scenic literalness in the music drama. He tried it, too, with the passion of discovery, with the inflamed zest of an unexampled curiosity. If the heat of that furnace could not give hardness and sharpness to material accessories, no other brain will ever do it. To reproduce on paper the actual city of Paris; the houses, the upholstery, the food, the wines, the game of pleasure, the game of business, the game of finance: a stupendous ambition—but, after all, unworthy of an artist. In exactly so far as he succeeded in pouring out on his pages that mass of brick and mortar and furniture and proceedings in bankruptcy, in exactly so far he defeated his end. The things by which he still lives, the types of greed and avarice and ambition and vanity and lost innocence of heart which he created—are as vital to-day as

they were then. But their material surroundings, upon which he expended such labor and pains . . . the eye glides over them. We have had too much of the interior decorator and the "romance of business" since his day. The city he built on paper is already crumbling. Stevenson said he wanted to blue-pencil a great deal of Balzac's "presentation"—and he loved him beyond all modern novelists. But where is the man who could cut one sentence from the stories of Mérimée? And who wants any more detail as to how Carmencita and her fellow factory girls made cigars? Another sort of novel? Truly. Isn't it a better sort?

In this discussion another great name automatically occurs. Tolstoi was almost as great a lover of material things as Balzac, almost as much interested in the way dishes were cooked, and people were dressed, and houses were furnished. But there is this determining difference; the clothes, the dishes, the moving, haunting interiors of those old Moscow houses, are always so much a part of the emotions of the people that they are perfectly synthesized; they seem to exist, not so much in the author's mind, as in the emotional penumbra of the characters themselves. When it is fused like this, literalness ceases to be literalness—it is merely part of the experience.

If the novel is a form of imaginative art, it cannot be at the same time a vivid and brilliant form of journalism. Out of the teeming, gleaming stream of the present it must select the eternal material of art. There are hopeful signs that some of the younger writers are trying to break away from mere verisimilitude, and, following the development of modern painting, to interpret imaginatively the material and social investiture of their characters; to present their scene by suggestion rather than by enumeration. The higher processes of art are all processes of simplification. The novelist must learn to write, and then he must unlearn it; just as the modern painter learns to draw, and then learns when utterly to disregard his accomplishment, when to subordinate it to a higher and truer effect. In this direction only, it seems to

me, can the novel develop into anything more varied and perfect than all of the many novels that have gone before.

One of the very earliest American novels might well serve as a suggestion to later writers. In *The Scarlet Letter* how truly in the spirit of art is the *mise en scène* presented. That drudge, the theme-writing high school student, could scarcely be sent there for information regarding the manners and dress and interiors of the Puritans. The material investiture of the story is presented as if unconsciously; by the reserved, fastidious hand of an artist, not by the gaudy fingers of a showman or the mechanical industry of a department store window-dresser. As I remember it, in the twilight melancholy of that book, in its consistent mood, one can scarcely ever see the actual surroundings of the people; one feels them, rather, in the dusk.

Whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named there—that, it seems to me, is created. It is the inexplicable presence of the thing not named, of the overtone divined by the ear but not heard by it, the verbal mood, the emotional aura of the fact or the thing or the deed, that gives high quality to the novel or the drama, as well as to poetry itself.

Literalness, when applied to the presenting of mental reactions and of physical sensations seems to be no more effective than when it is applied to material things. A novel crowded with physical sensations is no less a catalogue than one crowded with furniture. A book like *The Rainbow* by Mr. Lawrence, sharply reminds one how vast a distance lies between emotion and mere sensory reactions. Characters can be almost de-humanized by a laboratory study of the behavior of their bodily organs under sensory stimuli—can be reduced, indeed, to mere animal pulp. Can one imagine anything more terrible than the story of Romeo and Juliet, rewritten in prose by Mr. Lawrence?

How wonderful it would be if we could throw all the furniture out of the window; and along with it, all the meaningless reiterations concerning physical sensations, all the tiresome old patterns, and leave the room as bare as the stage of a Greek

theater, or as that house into which the glory of Pentecost descended; leave the scene bare for the play of emotions, great and little—for the nursery tale, no less than the tragedy, is killed by tasteless amplitude. The elder Dumas enunciated a great principle when he said that to make a drama, a man needed one passion, and four walls.

THE POLITICS OF MARTHA AND OF MARY *

ALFRED E. ZIMMERN

(Much of the literature of protest in America during the past few years has left its readers doubtful and uncertain. That the writers were dissatisfied was clear enough. The reason for their dissatisfaction was not always so clear. The following paper provides a point of view which helps to clarify the problem and give added meaning to such social criticism as has appeared in *Main Street* and *The Spoon River Anthology*. It has been our failure to distinguish between the realm of Martha and the realm of Mary that has brought disaster.

What is this distinction? The things of Martha, we are told, are rooted in the common life of man in society. The "better things" that Mary cared for are rooted in the inner life of the individual. One represents the world of practical affairs, where organization and standardization become increasingly necessary with the growing complexity of modern industry. The other is the realm of the individual human soul, where personal feelings and attachments, unreasoning instincts and emotions, largely hold sway. To ignore the realm of Mary means poverty in our inner life. To try to apply to it the standards of practical efficiency that apply to the realm of Martha means starvation and distortion. Mr. Sherwood Anderson, in revolting against the tyranny of machines ("To serve a machine is to become a machine") pays scant homage to the world of practical necessity. But the demands of the body must be met as well as the demands of the soul. The philosopher must have his dinner. How is one to bring about, in his own life, harmony between external standards of worldly success and the demands of inner satisfaction and

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happiness in his work? A momentous question, truly. It and many others, wide in their implications, are set clearly before us in the following paper.

Alfred E. Zimmern was born in Surbiton, England, 1879. He was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, where he afterwards taught Ancient History. In 1909 he gave up his work and spent a year in Athens. His *The Greek Commonwealth*, published in 1911, is a standard book. In 1919 he went to the University of Wales to take up a newly established professorship of international politics. For one year 1922-23, he was acting professor of political science at Cornell University.)

THE POLITICS OF MARTHA AND OF MARY

A FEW months ago a young German university student who had come to this country not for political propaganda, but to tell Americans something of the deeper life of his country since the war, found himself at tea in a professor's study with a group of local students. Among them was a young Frenchman who, though he had spent some years studying in this country, had remained in close touch with France and with French government circles. The two were introduced, and it was not long before they retired to a corner, deep in conversation. Only a few opening words could be overheard by the rest of the company. "I am so glad," exclaimed the German, "that you are a real Frenchman and not one of those hybrid internationalists. They are the one set of people I find intolerable." Assured that his companion was genuinely and unreservedly French, and that he had come to see him not as a duty or out of philanthropy, but because he was interested to meet an intelligent German, he threw off all embarrassment and self-justification and became genuinely and unreservedly German.

The interchange of thought and feeling that followed established a true and valuable international contact. When the German took his departure at midnight a day or two later, the Frenchman was the only one of his new acquaintances who was there to see him off, and it was arranged that, if possible, their next meeting should be at Paris.

This incident, taking place, as it did, at the height of the Ruhr crisis, throws a flood of light on the relation between nationality and politics and on the true nature of internationalism. These two young men were both loyal and self-respecting citizens of their respective republics. Meeting on foreign ground, they both

felt the duty, irrespective of their opinion on minor details, to support their government in a serious crisis. Were the crisis to develop into war, they would feel it their duty to offer their lives for the commonwealth of which they were members. It could happen, therefore, that duty might ordain that they should meet each other in battle, and of that, no doubt, they were well aware.

But they were intelligent enough to be able to penetrate behind an acute political difference, which the technical resources of statesmanship had not yet found means of resolving, to an underlying unity; and that unity they found not in the drab and meaningless shibboleths and uniformities which are often masqueraded as "internationalism," but in the rich diversity of national quality and self-expression. What bound them together and made their intercourse fruitful was no watery profession of fraternity, but just the sense that each of them, the one in his French and the other in his German roots, had been able to penetrate to the deep common subsoil of international understanding. Their French and German self-expression was no more than the harmony, the blend of diverse qualities, arising from the common scale of nationality.

They realized, what so many shallow people ignore, that the true patriot is at home everywhere, because he will feel at home with other patriots, while the man without a country, whatever high-sounding name he may give himself, is at home nowhere, neither in the company of homeless theorists like himself nor in that of his own restless and solitary nature. Much of our current internationalist propaganda, in fact, is a product of loneliness and discontent seeking some outlet of activity; and it is idle to hope that the world can be harmonized by the congregations and agitations of the unattached. To those who scour land and sea in order to make proselytes for internationalism, the old Socratic advice may surely be applied: "Know thyself." It is because so much is wrong with themselves that they find so much wrong with the world. When they have understood their

own nature and its problems, they will be better able to cooperate in solving the problems of the outer world. Politics were made for men and women, not men and women for politics. It is the realm of Mary, not that of Martha, which holds the master key to the happiness of mankind.

II

We shall realize this better after a brief survey of the nature and problems of these two contrasted realms. The contrast between them is as old as the dawn of self-consciousness, the revolt of the individual against the tyranny of the tribe or herd; and it was formulated, if not for the first time, at least in the most explicit and memorable shape, by the Teacher Who has done most of all men ever born to strengthen and deepen the sense of individuality, Who came, in His own words, to give men life and to give it more abundantly. In teaching men to draw the distinction between their duty to Cæsar and their duty to God, as in the words He let fall amid the family at Bethany, and in His whole doctrine of the kingdom and His attitude toward the constituted authorities, Jesus set forth a view of the relation between personality and nationality, on the one hand, and political obligation, on the other, which the young German and the young Frenchman, unconsciously perhaps, were illustrating in their mutual relationship.

Wherein does the realm of Martha consist? What exactly are "the things that are Cæsar's," with which statesmen and citizens are concerned?

The best definition of the material of politics is the old Roman definition enshrined in our English word "republic." *Res publica*, the public thing, is that which is public or common to us all, the common basis of our separate existences. This common basis is, of course, an external and material basis. The common thing, or, as it may also be called, the public interest, is the outward

order, the visible framework of society, what the Greeks called the equipment or dramatic appurtenances which enable us each to play our part in our individual lives. Without this common basis we should be units in anarchy; with it we are citizens, but not necessarily full-grown men and women. Politics is the art or business of adjusting these common affairs, and to be politically minded is to have a natural or acquired interest in this task of management or government.

During long periods of human history, especially during or after times of great social disturbance, or in times when the social equipment was being rapidly developed, the art of government has been generally regarded as the supreme art, and the perfection of external organization has been considered the chief and almost only test of civilization. The rulers of men, whether monarchs or statesmen, soldiers or civilians, have filled the history-books with their achievements and the market-places of cities and townships with their statues. Darwin, living quietly in a London suburb while he was revolutionizing the outlook of his generation, was almost abashed at receiving a visit from Gladstone, while it was Goethe the *Hofrat* of Weimar quite as much as Goethe the poet who preserved his self-respect while Napoleon was sweeping through his country. But we of the twentieth century, brought sharply into contact with civilizations which have succeeded where ours have failed and failed where ours have succeeded, are beginning to alter our standard of valuation. We are beginning to realize that politics and government are only one side, if an important side, of the work of civilization; that they involve certain qualities and a certain training which are unevenly distributed throughout the world, unevenly distributed even through the civilized countries. It is perhaps in Russia, which we may call "backward" or "advanced" according to our predilections, that the old valuation of civilization in purely external terms is, on the surface at any rate, being most tenaciously adhered to.

III

Two peoples in the roll of history have shown conspicuous aptitude for government, the Romans and the English. Other nations, some of whom it would be invidious to mention, have been strikingly successful in what may be called pseudo-government; that is, in employing political means for other than political purposes, in using "the public thing" for private and personal ends. But "politics" in that sense of the term has nothing to do with government or politics proper: the corrupt politician is as different from a statesman as a medieval alchemist was from a chemist, or as is the vender of a worthless drug from a conscientious physician, or a vaudeville performer from a great classical actor. Indeed, the vaudeville performer is pursuing a far more honorable calling than the politician, for he is frank and open in the acceptance of a second-class and imitative activity, while the politician is deceiving the people, and often himself as well, in reducing one of the most difficult and responsible of human activities into a competition in commercial bargaining and adroit intrigue.

What are the qualities which brought success to the Romans and the English in their work of government and enabled central Italy and southern Great Britain to become centers of great empires? Governor Hadley, in his study of "Rome and the World To-day," has lately drawn attention to the remarkable similarity in physiognomy between the old Roman rulers and the American governing type of to-day; and there is no doubt that the work of organization carried on by Roman public men and their compeers in Great Britain and America has left its imprint in their faces. The distinctive qualities required for such work may perhaps be summarized in two characteristics, public spirit and judgment.

What we call "public spirit" is a moral quality, a particular and highly specialized form of unselfishness. It involves a concentration upon the public welfare of a zeal and a devotion which

the non-political man, whether he be more intense or merely more sluggish in his attachments, prefers to bestow elsewhere. What we call "judgment," on the other hand, is an intellectual quality, a particular and highly specialized form of intellectual activity. It involves the power of taking a mass of facts, together constituting a "political situation," surveying them as a whole and framing a practical decision—a decision leading to action. To have a good judgment about a situation is not the same thing as to have an understanding of such a situation in all its bearings. Englishmen have not governed India by understanding her, nor did they quell the great Mutiny in 1857, which would assuredly have proved fatal to their rule had they been differently constituted, by their power of comprehending the motives which produced it. They held their ground by their power to comprehend not the underlying facts, but the urgent facts, and by their ability to decide as to "the next step." Just as public spirit, in its most concentrated form, involves a certain emotional abdication, so judgment, especially in an emergency, involves an intellectual abdication. The statesman, faced by the necessity of framing a practical decision, cannot afford to look too deeply into causes or to cultivate too nice a sense of intellectual consistency.

To sit on a committee is, for any one who has a keen intellectual life of his own, to suffer a species of martyrdom; in the process of arriving at a decision all the fine edges of the mind have to be rubbed off; or, if the victim resists, he earns the reputation of a bore who turns a business meeting into a philosophic dialogue, and seeks to apply to the world of mundane affairs, to drains and dispensaries and school management, the speculations that wiser men, who put things in their proper places, reserve for an evening discussion over the fragrance of a cigar.

A good illustration of the way in which these distinctively political gifts were employed in the building up of the British Empire is afforded by the story of Rajah Brooke of Sarawak. In the year 1839, James Brooke, a young military officer of the

British East India Company, who had retired from that service on inheriting a large fortune, was visiting the Malay Archipelago in his private yacht, and arrived at the territory of Sarawak, on the north coast of Borneo. Finding a civil war in progress, he interested himself in the matters at issue and made his influence felt so successfully that he was invited to take over the government. This he at first refused to do, but after he had succeeded, with a few Europeans, in putting an end to the fighting, the offer was renewed with the assent of both parties to the recent hostilities, and in 1842 James Brooke became Rajah of Sarawak. He died in 1868, bequeathing the position to his son, who left it to his nephew, with the result that, so observant a judge as Mr. Alleyne Ireland could write after a two months' visit up and down the country, that "in no country which I have ever visited are there to be observed so many signs of a wise and generous rule, such abundant indications of good government, as are to be seen on every hand in Sarawak."

This story, which in its details reads almost like a romance, is a beautiful illustration of English political mindedness. It was his public spirit which induced Brooke to interest himself in the obscure details of an intertribal Malay war; it was his sound judgment which enabled him to play the successful counselor; it was his public spirit again which secured him the confidence of the population; and it was his judgment which enabled him and his successors to rule over them. In the exercise of these qualities and of the tasks to which they led him on Brooke gave up a comfortable life on his English estate for residence in a tropical climate, surrendered a large part of his private fortune to make a success of his governmental experiment, and, to use his own words, dedicated himself to the task—how laborious and ungrateful to any one less politically minded!—of introducing "better laws and customs" and securing that the rights of the people of Sarawak "can never in the future be wantonly infringed." This is imperialism at its best. Its limitations are plain

enough; yet who of us, secure in the comforts of the temperate zone, can rail at it with an easy conscience?

IV

The Roman and the Englishman both founded empires created by the genius of a single people and inspired, if not governed, from a single center. But the age of empires is passing. The Empire of England has become, in designation and already in large part in fact, a multi-national "British commonwealth" and the other large-scale and heterogeneous dominions, the French, the Dutch, and, in its own distinctive way, the American, are grappling with similar problems. The true imperialist to-day is an internationalist. His scope can extend to nothing less than the whole planet. Augustus drew his frontier at the Rhine, and even twenty years ago Cecil Rhodes set limits to his statesman's vision; but the modern Cæsar, surveying the problems of the post-war world, must needs let his gaze travel round the globe. For while the qualities required of statesmen have remained unchanged, while public spirit and sound judgment are as indispensable to a Hoover and a Robert Cecil, to a Poincaré and a Mussolini, as they were to Augustus or James Brooke or the British makers of modern India, the nature of the material for which those qualities are required has changed beyond recognition. The industrial revolution and the consequent interdependence of the parts and peoples of mankind have changed the whole conditions of political activity. The problems of the modern world are no longer local, but large-scale, no longer concerned with the broils and prejudices of neighbors, but with forces which, in the vast sweep of their incidence, affect millions of men in all parts of the globe. We are only just beginning to realize that the age in which Alsace-Lorraine or the Irish question were first-class political problems has passed away beyond recall, and that in the new era which has dawned the distinctive problems, which hold the keys of peace and war and command the daily vigilance of statesmen, are of a different order.

Two or three of these may be indicated, if only to illustrate the type. No topic of discussion in the chancelleries contains so much material for controversy and possible warfare as that of the conservation of the world's mineral resources. Oil and tungsten, nickel and radium, involve no nationality problem. They are political, large-scale international material in the full sense of the words; and the statesmen who handle the practical issues of world-housekeeping—or, to put the words into Greek, "political economy"—arising out of them can do so without a trace, in their plans and policies, of that national flavor which attracted the French and German students in their interchange of ideas. Here we are alone with Martha and her specialized tasks and technic.

The same is true of another great set of problems that is bound to assume increasing importance in the work of government—those relating to public wealth. Plague and cholera and syphilis, trachoma and malaria, know no national distinctions: there is no American health and English health, but only health; no Italian plague or Polish plague, but only plague; and as the problem is international, calling for uniformity in diagnosis, treatment, and preventive methods, so also must be the outlook and organization of the governing minds who deal with it.

A third and thornier instance is commercial policy. Much national passion and prejudice have gathered round tariffs, but trading, with all that pertains to it, is essentially an international profession, and the problems arising out of it, from the fraudulent dealings of individual merchants to the self-regarding policies of peoples, are becoming riper every day for treatment on an international scale: that is, by statesmen who can look beyond the local issues involved to the wider interests of the world as a whole. "The time may even come," writes one who is not an idealist, but a hardened official, "when no minister will frame a tariff affecting the trade of other countries without previous consultation with the countries which it affects, and without being prepared to defend it in Council with his colleagues of those coun-

tries and on grounds which he can justify before the whole world."

The handling of these and similar problems must necessarily be keeping pace with the growth of the network of private contacts between country and country and continent and continent. The broad effect of modern statesmanship must inevitably be to bring about world unity, but a unity in the realm of Martha. When our modern Cæsars have taken the twentieth-century world, diagnosed its ills, and provided appropriate treatment, when they have policed and doctored and made decent and habitable a world organized and knit together for plain people to live in with safety and comfort, they will have done no more than lay the foundation of a civilized world society. What remains—and it is the better half—is of the realm of Mary.

V

A few years ago two well known personalities arrived in London from opposite ends of the earth. The one, Rabindranath Tagore, poet, philosopher, and educator, was the greatest living exponent of the quality and tradition of his own Bengali people and of the India of which they are beginning to form a conscious part. The other, Mary Pickford, needs no introduction to American readers. Walking quietly along the Strand shortly after his arrival, the Hindu found his way blocked by a large and tumultuous crowd. It had come to pay homage to the movie star in front of her hotel, while true greatness was jostled in the gutter.

There could hardly be a more striking contrast than that between Mary Pickford in her balcony and the Indian philosopher below. The screen actress represents the uniformities of modern large-scale life in their most insidious and disintegrating form. She is a Martha posturing in the guise of Mary, a cog in the vast mechanism of a business that is usurping and prostituting

the name of art. American by birth and no doubt also by sentiment, what does she bring of the spirit of America to her admirers in five continents? What is she doing to break down the inveterate European prejudice according to which to be American is to be less than human and "Americanism" is used to signify a mechanical hustle and bustle rather than a true and deep-felt expression of national life and personality? Featuring for millions in an empty studio cold imitation of an art that is remote from life, what passion, what individuality and nationality, can she convey through the camera to those who flock to her ghost for stimulus or relief for their jaded spirits?

The cinema is indeed the most conspicuous example in our modern society of power and intellect misapplied, of gifts that belong as of natural right to the realm of Mary cheapened and degraded by exposure in the market-places of the world, of the application of the ruthless processes of standardization to the intimacies of personality. And just because it has coarsened the methods and blunted the sensibilities of its human instruments for the sake of a world-wide popular market, it has sacrificed the power which all true art exercises over men's souls and become a devitalizing element among us, a mere drug and narcotic.

For if the things of Martha are rooted in the common life of man in society, the "better things" that Mary cared for are rooted in the inner life of the human soul. And the chief characteristic of the human soul, what constitutes its humanity, is its individuality. Certain popular cars have common measurements, and screen close-ups are devised according to a common pattern; but no two trees are alike, no two dogs or horses are alike, and still less are two human beings alike. This hoary platitude, with which stone-age man was already familiar, would not be worth repeating were it not constantly being ignored in practice. But in a society which "tests" human beings as though they were standard pieces of mechanism, which loves to create frames and pigeon-holes and then to fit its human material into them, which has constructed for the use of its citizens sets of orthodox trap-

pings for use in this or that walk or groove of life and is indignant when men and women prefer to walk along God's highway of earthly existence in the gait and guise that pleases them, it is well worth while to emphasize the glory of human uniqueness.

If men and women cannot be made to a pattern, neither can nations. If diversity is the glory of human beings as human beings, it is also the glory of nations as nations. The greatest men that the world has seen were also the most completely individual, the most different from all other men. Jesus was a Jew, and every one who knows the Jewish soul can recognize the Jewish quality in his personality. But he achieved his supremacy not by remaining true to the Jewish type, but by being himself, by becoming himself. The same is true of all the greatest human figures. "What really interests me in Plato," a distinguished philosopher once told me, "is that part of his work for the understanding of which no knowledge of Greek civilization is required." The remark scandalized me at the time, entangled as I still was in excessive preoccupation with externalities; but now I understand that its paradox conceals an element of vital truth. True, my friend, who had been brought up on the classics, did not realize how his own knowledge of Greece enabled him to rise with Plato above the general Hellenic level to the philosophic altitudes above. You cannot think away something that you have never thought. Really to understand Plato, you must begin your journey by the olives of the Ilissus and among the inquisitive crowd of the Athenian market-place, and work steadily upward, past the shepherds' huts and the mountain pastures, till you emerge on the high peak, with its serene survey over land and sea. But the mountain itself, like the spirit of those who win their way thither, is far above the common life below. Plato is an Athenian transfigured; Shakespeare an Englishman, and yet more than an Englishman; Goethe a German, yet not a typical German; Dante an Italian, yet a miracle of human power and passion for all time. Their greatness is built upon their nationality and cannot be disjoined from it; but it

is distinct and unique in itself. Of all the four it may indeed be said that every line that they have left us is pure autobiography. They had so completely individualized themselves that every outpouring of their spirit has the same personal note.

And the same, if in a lesser degree, is true of the achievement of nations. If Athens and Florence, England, France, and Flanders, have won international fame for the production of their national cultures, it is not because they strove to be national to drill their people according to a standardized preconception of the time, but because they gave Athenians and Florentines, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Flemings, the occasion and inspiration to be themselves. The nationality in their work which we now admire springs straight out of their personality, and it is this nationality which has made their work international and immortal. Devised according to an international pattern, it would have been lifeless; devised according to a national pattern, it would have remained on a common conventional level. Allowed to spring up out of the uniqueness of individual living and thinking, it has become a permanent power in the civilization of mankind. If America is disappointed with her national culture and its representatives, it is not to systems and programs that she must look for her salvation.

VI

Let us now set side by side and contrast the two kinds of forces of influences with which we have been dealing. On the one hand we have the realm of Martha, the world of politics or common affairs, a world of public spirit and efficiency, of organization and standardization, always tending to a larger and larger scale, and now becoming increasingly international. On the other we have the realm of Mary, the world of the individual human soul, a world personal and intimate, intense in its feelings and attachments, and capable of inspiring not the duty-bound activities of public spirit, but by the all-pervading and

integrating passion, alike unreasonable and unfathomable, which we call love.

If men realized the difference between these two realms and between the motives and impulses which operate within them, half the political problems of the world would be quickly solved. For the greater part of these so-called "problems," including those which seem most hopeless and intractable, arises simply from an overlapping of the two realms and from a failure on each side to realize that the two parties are dwelling on different planes and speaking different languages. All strictly political problems are relatively easy to solve: they are simply problems in applied science, whether it be economics or medicine or engineering or political science in the narrower sense of the term. As Sidney Webb, that prince in the study of externalities, once remarked, "patriotism is simply a problem of administrative areas." If it were, if this were all that the statesman was concerned with in Ireland and India, in Haiti, Liberia, or east-central Europe, his task would be simple. Draw scientific frontiers, establish an efficient government within them, with or without a show of democracy, and man in his threefold character, as Mr. and Mrs. Webb see him, man the producer, man the consumer, and man the citizen and defender of his home, will be duly satisfied.

But, unfortunately, men and women are not fashioned on this simple threefold pattern, nor are they gifted, as a rule, with a power of analysis enabling them to distinguish between the various elements in their thought about nations and commonwealths. And it is just from this confused thinking, this entanglement between the common and the individual, between the outer and the inner, that the most obstinate political and national problems arise. The Irish question is a good example. In its essence it was a struggle between the advocates of the two different realms, between the English, the political people *par excellence*, who sought to "politicize" it, as against the Irish, for whom the mystical Ireland of the heart is so much nearer and

more real than the visible island, with its highways and railroads, its creameries and fisheries, as an object of government. The English solution of the Irish question was to kill Irish nationality with kindness; in other words, with good government. To the Englishman, dwelling in the realm of Martha, the break-up of the United Kingdom seems, or seemed until he was harried out of his common-sense habits, a crime against the uniformities which make for prosperity and good government. "Was there ever such lunacy proposed by anybody?" cried Mr. Lloyd George at Carnarvon in October, 1920, in reference to the details of a dominion home-rule scheme for Ireland; and the solution which the same statesman later carried through pushed the lunacy still further, because it partitioned the island and built up a customs barrier through her green lands from sea to sea. To a British audience the inconveniences of separate industrial legislation, separate rates of taxation, a separate fiscal system, seemed unanswerable arguments for the maintenance of the union. But the Irishman, dwelling in another realm, never saw these arguments, still less tried to meet them. For him it was enough to know that the union, and the English garrison, maintained in his beloved country an element disturbing to his spiritual peace; and having decided to be "free," and that inner freedom was dependent upon certain external arrangements, he faced the practical consequences with the unflinching patriotic faith, but without the businesslike calculation of statesmanship. Now that the free state is in being, Irishmen in their turn are facing the responsibilities of Martha, and when they heed the scriptural injunction as to the duty to Cæsar and the duty to God, they must sometimes ruefully reflect that the wisest of all teachers left it to each group of His pupils, in each particular case, to decide *how much* of duty and devotion should be apportioned to each sphere.

There is indeed only one solution to the Irish question, as of the many other questions in which the two realms overlap. It is to draw them asunder and set each on its proper plane. It is to *depoliticize* nationality and to *de-emotionalize* politics, to

take nationality and its intimacies clean out of the world of state-housekeeping and efficiency, and to rescue politics, in its turn, from the rhetoric and rhodomontade, the emotional suggestions and confusions which impede the exercise of the statesman's sober judgment and public spirit. When politics become reasonable, and when men become as responsible in the discussion of political issues as in dealing with their own practical private concerns, we can look forward to a world set free from the fear of war. But just so long as passion runs riot on public issues, whether it be the sentimentalism of the pacifist, the so-called loyalty of the patriot, or the sheer emotional debauchery of the demagogue, conflict will be an ever-present possibility. For emotions do not confer: they collide, and under the impact of a collision they are apt to turn into their opposites. How often have we seen the peace fanatic in one cause become the war fanatic in another! There is no room in politics for emotion unballasted by reason, and it is one of the peculiar dangers of modern democracy that it affords an avenue to cheap success for men who, discontented, maybe, in their own intimate life, seek emotional relief in impassioned appeals to mass prejudice. The affairs of the republic are not a narcotic or an anodyne, to be turned to in the stress of dissatisfaction and *malaise;* still less a spectacle or a pastime, a contest in which victory goes to the quickest wits or the readiest tongue.

Americans seem, to the outside observer at any rate, to be particularly susceptible to the temptation unduly to emotionalize their politics. American history originates from the victory of a political dogma which has now almost become an inherited mode of feeling, and thus reason seems to find less easy an entry into the world of American political discussion than in communities where an older tradition and a wider background afford more emotional outlets in other directions. But as America comes of age and as Americans grow into their environment and imprint their own intimate and integrated personality upon it, this difficulty will diminish; and it should not be long before the

mood evoked by the stars and stripes becomes predominantly one not simply of buoyant enthusiasm and almost mystical reverence, but also of serious and meditative responsibility.

If the Irish question is an example of Mary impinging on the realm of Martha, there are other current controversies in which we can plainly watch the opposite process. A typical instance is that of the struggle for survival among languages. The tendency of the present-day world is to concentrate human intercourse more and more upon relatively few world media and to allow the large-scale forces of modern life to crush the less widely spoken languages, what are called in India the vernaculars, out of existence. Some have even gone so far as to construct new languages in the name of progress, tongues fit to be spoken by the *Robots* of "R. U. R." Yet every student of literature and every lover of human nature must realize that language is the magic casket of nationality and that a people which has lost or bartered away the tongue of its ancestors has surrendered with it a large part of its soul. Only the strongest peoples, such as the Scotch, can win their way to self-expression in an alien medium, adapting it to their nature rather than being adapted by it.

VII

Here, too, it is a question of how much is to be rendered to Cæsar. That all Welshmen and Irishmen should speak English is a necessary concession to Martha, but it is too often forgotten that bilingualism, the ability to speak two languages currently and fluently, is not an inconvenience, but an enrichment. Nor need the older ancestral language be relegated to Sunday and to sacred and traditional uses. No one who has ever seen a Welshman converse in English, and then, turning to a compatriot, unbutton his very soul, as it were, in his own tongue can doubt that the "vernaculars" so much despised by the practical man have a rich future before them if men will but have the courage to be true to their deepest instincts. It is not for an outsider to

make practical suggestions to American educationists on this subject, but he may be permitted to draw attention to the splendid and varied endowment of inherited cultures and qualities with which America has become enriched during the last century—an endowment which makes her the natural center of internationalism and of the processes of mutual understanding between nations, and to deplore that so much of precious quality has been allowed to run to waste, and even to perish in contempt, through the ignorance and short-sightedness of sons of Martha in high places. But happily the exponents of the newer school have realized the harm that has been done, and are exerting themselves manfully to repair it.

VIII

A struggle of the same kind as that which we have observed in the life of society is being waged incessantly within the mind and spirit of the individual modern man and woman. On what principle is he to choose his mode of livelihood? Shall he aim at outward success or at inner satisfaction and harmony? And when he has chosen the better alternative and dedicated himself to an employment that is also truly a vocation, how far is he to carry his indifference to external standards and his sacrifice of worldly success? To what extent is he justified in allowing the form or quality of his work to be affected by the demand of the popular market? How many a potential poet and artist, philosopher, historian, and essayist, endowed with the ability to leave behind him first-rate and enduring work, has been tempted away by the sons of Martha into that modern city labyrinth where high purposes are diluted into trivial achievements, where the daily output of chatter with pen or pencil takes the place of the considered utterance to which men might have listened in after years! When we compare our unparalleled opportunities for first-rate achievement with the relative leanness of what the modern world has to show for its pretended efforts, we do not sufficiently reflect on the manifold ways in which ardent aspira-

tion and budding genius are constantly being thwarted and stifled by the very mechanism which purports to exist for their service. How often has the cold indifference or wilful opposition of society led genius to suicide! And how much oftener to a life of concession and compromise, which, being a living extinction, is worse than the incident of death itself!

And yet the externalities remain, solid, inexorable, unavoidable, as real as the body itself, against the limitations of which our souls often chafe. Even the loyalest servant of the Muse, even the most absent-minded philosopher, must have his dinner and the wherewithal to procure it. Even the community of anarchists, retiring from an over-regimented world to seek serenity in the backwoods, must have its humble highway and levy the rates for its upkeep. And Jesus himself, when He gently rebuked Martha for being "cumbered with much serving," neither condemned her activities nor refused to partake of their achievement. The practical decision, here as always in this world of sun and shadow, of body and soul, of urgent necessities and abiding eternities, involves a working adjustment between the forces and influences of the two realms. How is that adjustment to be made? That question each modern man and woman must decide for themselves. But two guiding considerations suggest themselves.

In the first place, we make our adjustment best when we make it consciously and deliberately. To flee from the modern world because it is full of machinery is to repeat the error of monasticism. Let us live boldly and freely in it, using what our environment has to offer us, but not allowing it to use us. The world about us is full of men and women who, like a globe-trotter's baggage, are continually being plastered afresh with new labels: every incident, every idea, every article and conversation, leaves its impact on the yielding surface of their nature. This is not to live, but simply, in the words of the poet, to be

> "Whirled round in earth's diurnal course,
> With rocks and stones and trees."

Others, seeking to be "practical," form a hard shell of resistance against outward influences and become assimilated, in their inner nature as in their daily habits, to the machine or organization which they are paid to serve. Either way lies suicide and the disintegration of personality. You cannot serve both God and Mammon: neither can you serve both the God within you and the machine without. To serve a machine is to become a machine.

Secondly, the aim of the adjustment must be to attain to unity, to a twofold unity, a unity in the outer realm as in the inner. No serious-minded modern man, however clamant the call of his inner life, can afford to dispense with the duties of citizenship or with the responsibilities of international adjustment. The task still remains before us of making this world a fit place to live in for the children of men. Invention and organization, both in natural science and in the arts of government, have shown us the possibilities which, for the first time in the planet's history, lie before us in this endeavor; and we dare not neglect them.

But to this outward unity of the statesman's dream there must be an inner unity to correspond. If we rest satisfied with the ideal of "a world set free for democracy," we may but have pointed the way to a world commonwealth fated, like imperial Rome, to perish of inward inanition. Leagues and commonwealths are made for man, not he for them. If Cæsar's affairs are ever to be set in true order, it will be because the generation which has done its duty by them has also done its duty to God; because there is at last a world of men and women who are masters both of their destiny and their environment, who have learned how best to employ the many treasures of their personal and national inheritance, to draw all that is best and finest in the world about them into the broad, flowing stream of a personal life and a national culture, and to say with renewed thankfulness every day, as they survey the diversity of human gifts and obligations, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all."

AUTUMN TINTS IN CHIVALRY*

C. E. Montague

(We have lived through the Great War and are perhaps anxious to forget it. Yet the problems of the peace are still before us. And when a novel or a play about the war does come into existence, it brings back the old sensations to us. For some they may be bitter ones. But upon most of us time and second thought have worked their wholesome influence, and the emotions that remembrance of the war awaken are directed against the cruelty and the ineffectiveness of war itself rather than in hatred against a definite opponent. Insofar as the statement is true, we have made some advance in civilization.

Mr. Montague's essay will stimulate this advance. He does, it is true, take us back once more into front-line trenches. But he is not interested to revive the squalor of life and the careless language that was found there. Such circumstances he believes too irrelevant for mention. He says little about them since his concern is with more important matters. He prefers to give us the real opinions and emotions of his countrymen in arms. And he finds these English soldiers strangely lacking in hatred of their enemy. That was left for propagandists seated at home in safety. The soldiers at the front were troubled only by the nasty business of winning the war. When this objective would not be impeded, they were ready to fraternize with their German opponents who they knew were husbands and fathers and brothers like themselves. Their impulse may have been due to ignorance or to indifference concerning the causes and issues of the war. But it was notwithstanding a healthy one, so admirable that

* From *Disenchantment*. Brentano's, 1922.

Mr. Montague finds it richly colored with the autumn tints of a chivalry we have thought to be long since dead.

This wholesome and impressive essay, in which the vivid recounting of actual incidents serves only to reveal a profound understanding of the brotherhood of man, is the work of a journalist. We who are Americans may profitably reflect upon the fact that Mr. Montague has been for thirty-five years on the staff of the English liberal newspaper, the Manchester *Guardian*. Our own papers have not been breeding his type of man.)

AUTUMN TINTS IN CHIVALRY

I

In either of two opposite tempers you may carry on war. In one of the two you will want to rate your enemy, all round, as high as you can. You may pursue him down a trench, or he you; but in neither case do you care to have him described by somebody far, far away as a fat little short-sighted scrub. Better let him pass for a paladin. This may at bottom be vanity, sentimentality, all sort of contemptible things. Let him who knows the heart of man be dogmatic about it. Anyhow, this temper comes, as they would say in Ireland, of decent people. It spoke in Porsena of Clusium's whimsical prayer that Horatius might swim the Tiber safely; it animates Velasquez' knightly *Surrender of Breda;* it prompted Lord Roberts' first words to Cronje when Paardeberg fell—"Sir, you have made a very gallant defense"; it is avowed in a popular descant of Newbolt's—

> To honor, while you strike him down,
> The foe who comes with eager eyes.

The other temper has its niche in letters, too. There was the man that "wore his dagger in his mouth." And there was Little Flanigan, the bailiff's man in Goldsmith's play. During one of our old wars with France he was always "damning the French, the parle-vous, and all that belonged to them." "What," he would ask the company, "makes the bread rising? The parle-vous that devour us. What makes the mutton fivepence a pound? The parle-vous that eat it up. What makes the beer threepence-halfpenny a pot?"

Well, your first aim in war is to hit your enemy hard, and the

question may well be quite open—in which of these tempers can he be hit hardest? If, as we hear, a man's strength be "as the strength of ten because his heart is pure," possibly it may add a few foot-pounds to his momentum in an attack if he has kept a clean tongue in his head. And yet the production of heavy woolens in the West Riding, for War Office use, may, for all that we know, have been accelerated by yarns about crucified Canadians and naked bodies of women found in German trenches. There is always so much, so bewilderingly much, to be said on both sides. All I can tell is that during the war the Newbolt spirit seemed, on the whole, to have its chief seat in and near our front line, and thence to die down westward all the way to London. There Little Flanigan was enthroned, and, like Montrose, would bear no rival near his throne, so that a man on leave from our trench system stood in some danger of being regarded as little better than one of the wicked. Anyhow, he was a kind of provincial. Not his will, but that of Flanigan, had to be done. For Flanigan was the center of things; he had leisure, or else volubility was his trade; and he had got hold of the megaphones.

II

In the first months of the war there was any amount of good sportsmanship going; most, of course, among men who had seen already the whites of enemy eyes. I remember the potent emetic effect of Flaniganism upon a little blond Regular subaltern maimed at the first battles of Ypres. "Pretty measly sample of the sin against the Holy Ghost!" the one-legged child grunted savagely, showing a London paper's comic sketch of a corpulent German running away. The first words I ever heard uttered in palliation of German misdoings in Belgium came from a Regular N.C.O., a Dragoon Guards sergeant, holding forth to a sergeants' mess behind our line. "We'd have done every damn thing they did," he averred, "if it had been we." I thought him rather extravagant, then. Later on, when the long row of hut hospitals

jammed between the Calais-Paris Railway at Etaples and the great reinforcement camp on the sandhills above it, was badly bombed from the air, even the wrath of the R.A.M.C. against those who had wedged in its wounded and nurses between two staple targets scarcely exceeded that of our Royal Air Force against war correspondents who said the enemy must have done it on purpose.

Airmen, no doubt, or some of them, went to much greater lengths in the chivalrous line than the rest of us. Many things helped them to do it. Combatant flying was still new enough to be almost wholly an officer's job; the knight took the knocks, and the squire stayed behind and looked after his gear. Air-fighting came to be pretty well the old duel, or else the medieval mêlée between little picked teams. The clean element, too, may have counted—it always looked a clean job from below, where your airy notions got mixed with trench mud, while the airman seemed like Sylvia in the song, who so excelled "each mortal thing upon the dull earth dwelling." Whatever the cause, he excelled in his bearing towards enemies, dead or alive. The funeral that he gave to Richthofen in France was one of the few handsome gestures exchanged in the war. And whenever Little Flanigan at home began squealing aloud that we ought to take some of our airmen off fighting and make them bomb German women and children instead, our airmen's scorn for these ethics of the dirt helped to keep up the flickering hope that the post-war world might not be ignoble.

Even on the dull earth it takes time and pains to get a clean-run boy or young man into a mean frame of mind. A fine N.C.O. of the Grenadier Guards was killed near Laventie—no one knows how—while going over to shake hands with the Germans on Christmas morning. "What! not shake on Christmas Day?" He would have thought it poor, sulky fighting. Near Armentières at the Christmas of 1914 an incident happened which seemed quite the natural thing to most soldiers then. On Christmas Eve the Germans lit up their front line with Chinese lanterns.

Two British officers thereupon walked some way across No Man's Land, hailed the enemy's sentries, and asked for an officer. The German sentries said, "Go back, or we shall have to shoot." The Englishmen said "Not likely!" advanced to the German wire, and asked again for an officer. The sentries held their fire and sent for an officer. With him the Englishmen made a one-day truce, and on Christmas Day the two sides exchanged cigarettes and played football together. The English intended the truce to end with the day, as agreed, but decided not to shoot next day till the enemy did. Next morning the Germans were still to be seen washing and breakfasting outside their wire; so our men, too, got out of the trench and sat about in the open. One of them, cleaning his rifle, loosed a shot by accident, and an English subaltern went to tell the Germans it had not been fired to kill. The ones he spoke to understood, but as he was walking back a German somewhere wide on a flank fired and hit him in the knee, and he has walked lame ever since. Our men took it that some German sentry had misunderstood our fluke shot. They did not impute dishonor. The air in such places was strangely clean in those distant days. During one of the very few months of open warfare a cavalry private of ours brought in a captive, a gorgeous specimen of the terrific Prussian Uhlan of tradition. "But why didn't you put your sword through him?" an officer asked, who belonged to the school of Froissart less obviously than the private. "Well, sir," the captor replied, "the gentleman wasn't looking."

III

At no seat of war will you find it quite easy to live up to Flanigan's standards of hatred towards an enemy. Reaching a front, you find that all you want is just to win the war. Soon you are so taken up with the pursuit of this aim that you are always forgetting to burn with the gem-like flame of pure fury that fires the lion-hearted publicist at home.

A soldier might have had the Athanasian ecstasy all right till

he reached the firing line. Every individual German had sunk the *Lusitania;* there was none righteous, none. And yet at a front the holy passion began to ooze out at the ends of his fingers. The bottom trouble is that you cannot fight a man in the physical way without somehow touching him. The relation of actual combatants is a personal one—no doubt, a rude, primitive one, but still quite advanced as compared with that between a learned man at Berlin who keeps on saying *Delenda est Britannia!* at the top of his voice and a learned man in London who keeps on saying that every German must have a black heart because Cæsar did not conquer Germany as he did Gaul and Britain. Just let the round head of a German appear for a passing second, at long intervals, above a hummock of clay in the middle distance. Before you had made half a dozen sincere efforts to shoot him the fatal germ of human relationship had begun to find a nidus again: he had acquired in your mind the rudiments of a personal individuality. You would go on trying to shoot him with zest—indeed, with a diminished likelihood of missing, for mere hatred is a flustering emotion. And yet the hatred business had started crumbling. There had begun the insidious change that was to send you home, on your first leave, talking unguardedly of "old Fritz" or of "the good old Boche" to the pain of your friends, as if he were a stout dog fox or a real stag or a hare.

The deadliest solvent of your exalted hatreds is laughter. And you can never wholly suppress laughter between two crowds of millions of men standing within earshot of each other along a line of hundreds of miles. There was, in the Loos salient in 1916, a German who, after his meals, would halloo across to an English unit taunts about certain accidents of its birth. None of his British hearers could help laughing at his mistakes, his knowledge, and his English. Nor could the least humorous priest of ill-will have kept his countenance at a relief when the enemy shouted: "We know you are relieving," "No good hiding it," "Good-by, Ox and Bucks," "Who's coming in?" and some hurried humorist in the obscure English battalion relieving shouted back, with a

terrific assumption of accent, "Furrst Black Watch!" or "Th' Oirish Gyards!" and a hush fell at the sound of these great names. Comedy, expelled with a fork by the dignified figure of Quenchless Hate, had begun to steal back of herself.

At home that tragedy queen might do very well; she did not have these tenpenny nails scattered about on her road to puncture the nobly inflated tires of her chariot. The heroes who spoke up for shooing all the old German governesses into the barbed wire compounds were not exposed to the moral danger of actually hustling, *propria persona*, these formidable ancients. But while Hamilcar at home was swearing Hannibal and all the other little Hamilcars to undying hatred of the foe, an enemy dog might be trotting across to the British front line to sample its rats, and its owner be losing in some British company's eyes his proper quality as an incarnation of all the Satanism of Potsdam and becoming simply "him that lost the dog."

If you took his trench it might be no better; perhaps Incarnate Evil had left its bit of food half-cooked, and the muddy straw, where it lay last, was pressed into a hollow by Incarnate Evil's back as by a cat's. Incarnate Evil should not do these things that other people in trenches do. It ought to be more strange and beastly and keep on making beaux gestes with its talons and tail, like the proper dragon slain by St. George. Perhaps Incarnate Evil was extinct and you went over its pockets. They never contained the right things—no poison to put in our wells, no practical hints for crucifying Canadians; only the usual stuffing of all soldiers' pockets—photographs and tobacco and bits of string and the wife's letters, all about how tramps were always stealing potatoes out of the garden, and how the baby was worse, and was his leave never coming? No good to look at such things.

IV

With this guilty weakness gaining upon them our troops drove the Germans from Albert to Mons. There were scandalous scenes on the way. Imagine two hundred German prisoners grinning

inside a wire cage while a little Cockney corporal chaffs them in half the dialects of Germany! His father, he says, was a slop tailor in Whitechapel; most of his journeymen came from somewhere or other in Germany—"Ah! and my dad sweated 'em proper," he says proudly; so the boy learnt all their kinds of talk. He convulses Bavarians now with his flow of Silesian. He fraternizes grossly and jubilantly. Other British soldiers laugh when one of the Germans sings, in return for favors received, the British ballad "Knocked 'em in the Ol' Kent Road." By the time our men had marched to the Rhine there was little hatred left in them. How can you hate the small boy who stands at the farm door visibly torn between dread of the invader and deep delight in all soldiers, as soldiers? How shall a man not offer a drink to the first disbanded German soldier who sits next to him in a public house at Cologne, and try to find out if he was ever in the line at the Brickstacks or near the Big Crater? Why, that might have been his dog!

The billeted soldier's immemorial claim on "a place by the fire" carried on the fell work. It is hopelessly bad for your grand Byronic hates if you sit through whole winter evenings in the abhorred foe's kitchen and the abhorred foe grants you the uncovenanted mercy of hot coffee and discusses without rancor the relative daily yields of the British and the German milch cow. And then comes into play the British soldier's incorrigible propensity, wherever he be, to form virtuous attachments. "Love, unfoiled in the war," as Sophocles says. The broad road has a terribly easy gradient. When all the great and wise at Paris were making peace, as somebody said, with a vengeance, our command on the Rhine had to send a wire to say that unless something was done to feed the Germans starving in the slums it could not answer for discipline in its army; the men were giving their rations away, and no orders would stop them. Rank "Pro-Germanism," you see—the heresy of Edith Cavell; "Patriotism is not enough; I must have no hatred or bitterness in my heart." While these men fought on, year after year, they had mostly

been growing more void of mere spite all the time, feeling always more and more sure that the average German was just a decent poor devil like every one else. One trembles to think what the really first-class haters at home would have said of our army if they had known at the time.

V

Even at places less distant than home the survival of old English standards of fighting had given some scandal. In that autumn of the war when our generalship seemed to have explored all its own talents and found only the means to stage in an orderly way the greatest possible number of combats of pure attrition, the crying up of unknightliness became a kind of fashion among a good many Staff Officers of the higher grades. "I fancy our fellows were not taking many prisoners this morning," a Corps Commander would say with a complacent grin, on the evening after a battle. Jocose stories of comic things said by privates when getting rid of undesired captives became current in messes far in the rear. The other day I saw in a history of one of the most gallant of all British divisions an illustration given by the officer who wrote it of what he believed to be the true martial spirit. It was the case of a wounded Highlander who had received with a bomb a German Red Cross orderly who was coming to help him. A General of some consequence during part of the war gave a lecture, towards its end, to a body of officers and others on what he called "the fighting spirit." He told with enthusiasm an anecdote of a captured trench in which some of our men had been killing off German appellants for quarter. Another German appearing and putting his hands up, one of our men—so the story went—called out, " 'Ere! Where's 'Arry? 'E ain't 'ad one yet." Probably some one had pulled the good general's leg, and the thing never happened. But he believed it, and deeply approved the "blooding" of 'Arry. That, he explained, was the "fighting spirit." Men more versed than he in the

actual hand-to-hand business of fighting this war knew that he was mistaken, and that the spirit of trial by combat and that of pork-butchery are distinct. But that is of course. The notable thing was that such things should be said by any one wearing our uniform. Twenty years before, if it had been rumored, you would, without waiting, have called the rumor a lie invented by some detractor of England or of her army. Now it passed quite unhissed. It was the latter-day wisdom. Scrofulous minds at home had long been itching, publicly and in print, to bomb German women and children from aeroplanes, and to "take it out of" German prisoners of war. Now the disease had even affected some parts of the non-combatant Staff of our army.

VI

You know the most often quoted of all passages of Burke. Indeed, it is only through quotations of it that most of us know Burke at all—

But the age of chivalry is gone . . . the unbought grace of life, the cheap defense of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness.

Burke would never say a thing by halves. And as truth goes by halves, and declines to be sweeping like rhetoric, Burke made sure of being wrong to the tune of some fifty per cent. The French Revolution did not, as his beautiful language implies, confine mankind for the rest of its days to the procreation of curs. And yet his words do give you, in their own lush, Corinthian way, a notion of something that probably did happen, a certain limited shifting of the center of gravity of West European morals or manners.

One would be talking like Burke—talking, perhaps you might say, through Burke's hat—if one were to say that the war found chivalry alive and left it dead. Chivalry is about as likely to perish as brown eyes or the moon. Yet something did happen, during the war, to which these wild words would have some sort of relation. We were not all Bayards in 1914; even then a great part of our Press could not tell indignation from spite, nor uphold the best cause in the world without turpitude. Nor were we all, after the Armistice, rods of the houses of Thersites and Cleon; Haig was still alive, and so were Gough and Hamilton and thousands of Arthurian subalterns and privates and of like-minded civilians, though it is harder for a civilian not to lose generosity during a war. But something had happened; the chivalrous temper had had a set-back; it was no longer the mode; the latest wear was a fine robust shabbiness. All through the war there had been a bear movement in Newbolts and Burkes, and, corresponding to this, a bull movement in stocks of the Little Flanigan group.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

	PAGE
Aydelotte, Frank: *What the American Rhodes Scholar Gets from Oxford*	321
Beerbohm, Max: *A Relic*	225
Belloc, Hilaire: *On an Unknown Country*	161
Bennett, Arnold: *Literary Taste*	339
Benson, A. C.: *Conversation*	249
Brooks, Van Wyck: *"Highbrow" and "Lowbrow"*	1
Canby, H. S.: *Sentimental America*	113
Cather, Willa: *The Novel Démeublé*	289
Clutton-Brock, A.: *On Friendship*	219
Conklin, Edwin Grant: *Science and the Faith of the Modern*	201
Coolidge, Calvin: *The Norwegian Migration to America*	65
Dunbar, Olivia Howard: *Portrait of a Family*	45
Eastman, Max: *Names Practical and Poetic*	287
Galsworthy, John: *Castles in Spain*	187
Grahame, Kenneth: *Ideals and Day-Dreams*	169
Guedalla, Philip: *Fez*	141
Hewlett, Maurice: *Summer*	153
James, Henry: *The Vicar of Wakefield*	365
Merz, Charles: *The Once Open Road*	101
Meynell, Alice: *The Rhythm of Life*	147
Montague, C. E.: *Autumn Tints In Chivalry*	419
Nicholson, Meredith: *The Cheerful Breakfast Table*	235
Quiller-Couch, Sir A. T.: *On Jargon*	265
Raleigh, Sir Walter: *Don Quixote*	373
Santayana, George: *Dickens*	347
Sherman, Stuart P.: *What is a Puritan?*	17
Shorey, Paul: *The American Language*	297
Smith, Logan Pearsall: *Trivia*	259
Thompson, Basil: *Louisiana: (Madame de la Louisiane)*	127
Turner, Frederick Jackson: *The West and American Ideals*	79
Zimmern, Alfred E.: *The Politics of Martha and of Mary*	397

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